

AN
EXPOSURE
OF THE
HINDU RELIGION,
IN REPLY TO
MORA BHATTA DANDEKARA:
TO WHICH IS PREFIXED
A TRANSLATION OF THE BHATTA'S TRACT.

BY THE
REV. JOHN WILSON,
OF THE SCOTTISH MISSION, BOMBAY.

“ Shall a man make gods unto himself, and they are no Gods”?

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1832.

TO

R. T. WEBB, Esq.

OF THE CIVIL SERVICE,

THE FOLLOWING SMALL WORK

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

BY THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

IN the beginning of February 1831, I received a note from a Shastrì resident in Bombay, informing me, that one of his friends, who had lately arrived at the seat of the Presidency, conceiving that he was able to refute all the objections which have been brought against the Hindu religion, was desirous of having an interview with me. I immediately granted him an opportunity of fulfilling his wish; and, finding him desirous of a public discussion, I readily consented to engage with him. The debate, which was attended by a great number of Bráhmans and other respectable natives, continued during six successive evenings. It referred principally to the character of the Divine Being, the means of salvation, the principles of morals, and the allotment of rewards and punishments. The doctrines of Christianity, and their claims to attention, were amply stated; and many objections were urged against the reigning superstition of India. Mora Bhatta Dandekara, who was the prime mover of the discussion, received much aid from several of his friends. I enjoyed the assistance of a converted Bráhman who some months before had publicly entered the lists with a Puránika. Good order was preserved, through the instrumentality of my

highly valued friend Mr. WEBB, who, at the request of both parties, had kindly consented to preside. The Bráhmans were the first to solicit a cessation of hostilities.

It was the intention of Mora Bhatta to have published an account of the debate; and, encouraged by the donations of some of the wealthy Hindus in this city, he made considerable progress in preparing a narrative of the proceedings. The difficulty of preserving fidelity, however, arising from his having neglected to take notes, induced him to desist, and to resort to another expedient in defence of Hinduism. After the labour of a few months, he produced the *Hindu-dharmasthápana*; and challenged me to write a reply, which I accordingly publish in Maráthi and English.

At the request of the Bhatta, and with the view of satisfying the curiosity of many of the friends of the propagation of the gospel, as well as affording my readers an opportunity of judging of the fairness of my remarks, I have prefixed to the "Exposure", a translation of his pamphlet. It is almost *verbatim* a copy of one which was prepared by my highly respected fellow labourer the Rev. ROBERT NESBIT, for the gratification of a few of his acquaintances.

The Bhatta, though, as will be observed, he

has, in some instances, disguised the truth, writes generally in support of what has been called the exoteric system of Hinduism; and a little reflection will shew, that the attempt to uphold any other can only be made with the sacrifice of the pretensions to inspiration on the part of the Hindu Scriptures, and with admissions which must prove destructive to the popular superstition. The efforts which have been made to refine on the Bráhmancial faith have hitherto proved, and must ever prove, completely abortive. It is essentially distinguished by exaggeration, confusion, contradiction, puerility, and immorality. Imagination itself cannot form a fabric out of its discordant materials. The history of its origin and changes, however, is an interesting subject of inquiry, and merits more attention than has hitherto been bestowed upon it. The result, as far as its founders and observers are concerned, will be that stated by Paul: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.....and even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient".

I trust that my Hindu readers will allow me to plead the importance of the subject treated of as

a reason urging them to its full and anxious consideration. I have constantly endeavoured to avoid unnecessarily hurting their feelings; and I should be sorry to think that, in any degree, I may prove the occasion of offending an ingenuous mind in the pursuit of truth. It is the most anxious wish of the friends of the diffusion of Christianity, that the welfare of the Hindus may be promoted; and that, freed from the bonds of superstition, they may ever enjoy the blessings of mental and spiritual liberty. Many of the natives are now giving them every credit for these intentions.

The language of the following pages, it is proper to observe, accords as nearly as possible with the Marát,hi. In some instances, I have quoted a few Shlokas in the original Sanskrita. The notes, which are principally thrown into an Appendix, are intended to illustrate the text. The system of representing Sanskrita words, proposed by Sir WILLIAM JONES has, with a few modifications, been observed.

J. W.

BOMBAY, Feb. 1832.

TRANSLATION
OF THE
VERIFICATION OF THE HINDU RELIGION.

SHRI
HINDU-DHARMA-ST, HAPANA.

ALL men, having, according to their inclination, made minute inquiry, practise the observances of religion. Of whatsoever religion a man may be, he is certain that by that religion he will be saved. People of another religion may come and say a great deal; but no one, on this account, will forsake his own religion, and embrace theirs. On this subject, therefore, let books be written and published,—of what kind and by whom they may, it matters not. But among the Hindus learning has been gradually decreasing; an ignorance of the nature of religion, and of the marks of its truth or falsehood, has been more and more prevailing: at such a disadvantageous time were we to remain in silence, making no reply to what people of another religion have published, the most serious evil would, in no great length of time, be the consequence. It is, on this account, that, to the best of my ability, I write this tract. Of the truth or falsehood of its statements, let God himself be Judge.

In the little Marát,hi books which the Christian Priests are at present in the habit of writing, the principal subject treated of is generally Idolatry. As God has no distinctive forms, they reckon it a piece of absurdity that the Hindus

should esteem an image to be God, and worship it as such. This subject, therefore, in the first place, must be fully considered. Now there is not a single Hindu who esteems an image to be God: every one perfectly knows there is but one God, and that he is without form, and all-powerful. Why, then, worship an image, it may be asked. To this we reply that all men are by nature stubborn, depraved, and ignorant. Although it is known that there is a God, yet that God is no where to be seen: when sin is committed, it does not appear that, in this world, he punishes the sinner on account of it: all fear of him is thus banished from the mind. The king is no where to be seen; and, when his subjects transgress, no punishment is inflicted. In these circumstances, those that will not live as they list must be rare indeed. Were no restriction laid upon men in their worldly connexions and enjoyments, almost all would become apostate through the bewitching influence of women, wealth, and the like. In consideration of all this, with a view to the interests of the people, image-worship, &c. have, in the sacred books, been devised; and for the body many religious observances have been prescribed. Only look at the practices and behaviour of those in whose religion no such observances are laid down, and you will at once see whether or not image-worship and the like are of any use. That God is like the image no one imagines; but, merely forming such a conception, he spends a short time every day in its worship, and thus acquires peace of mind. This process having been continued, the true knowledge of God is at length obtained, and the mind is separated from the world. Then it is, that observances are seen to be of no use, and are quitted of course. In the sacred books, also, directions are given for their abandonment in due time and manner; and this abandonment has been effected by many. Where qualifications like theirs, have not been attained, of what avail is it for any one merely with the mouth to teach lessons of wisdom, and yet live as his inclinations prompt? If in image-worship, and those observances which relate to the body and other things there is no virtue, pray what virtue is there in mere speaking? The virtue of every thing depends upon

fixedness of mind in regard to it. Those who have acquired such a fixedness of mind are rare indeed. Where a beautiful wife, wealth, and honour are still coveted; anger not subdued; a private and selfish object aimed at by means of deception;—where this is the case, the mere speaking of God with the mouth will never confer a title to the name of Saint.

The chief reason for prescribing image-worship is this:—As a vessel that is full can admit of the entrance of nothing more, so the mind that is occupied with the desire of earthly things can never admit and entertain the love of God. This desire, therefore, must be expelled. The expulsion, however, is exceedingly difficult, owing to the instability of the mind. It would be as easy to persuade a monkey to be at rest, as prevail on the mind to settle down in quiet. The mind can never remain for a moment without an object to which it may attach itself; and they are only visible things to which it will attach itself. Now God is without form or figure: how then can it be attached to him? In the sacred books, therefore, pure objects have been devised and formed, and the attention of the mind has been directed to them with the view of separating it from those which are impure. It is for this purpose that the four-armed image of God, and other images of a like description, are used; and it is by means of them that evil thoughts are expelled from the mind. In like manner, the mind must be ever active: the ceremonies of image-worship are therefore prescribed to afford it occupation. From these exercises, there arises merit, and by means of them, the mind acquires the power of fixing its contemplation on the invisible God; and, when once this is the case, uninterrupted jey, to which we gave the name of *Moksha*, is the happy result.

We shall now consider how merit arises from image-worship and other good works. One proof of this is the declaration of the sacred books upon the subject. When a man of veracity coming from a distant country tells us of the wonderful things he has seen there, as for instance, that he saw twins whose bodies adhered to each other, we immediately believe that what he states is true; for it must be allowed that the evidence of

testimony is no less suited to convey true knowledge than the evidence of sense, or the evidence of inference. Such is the case even with respect to human testimony. Who, then, would suspect or deny that divine testimony given by Brahmá, the primeval male? When there was nought but one immaterial God, he that sprung from him could owe his existence to nothing else but the simple energy of Deity. It must therefore be allowed that he came into distinct and visible existence altogether God. What self-willed empty-headed creatures, then, are those of modern days who suspect or deny his testimony!

I now bring forward an argument from reason. Merit arises from pleasing God. Worship and the like are the means of doing so. To give an example. A person of your acquaintance is in a distant country or in your own. You take another individual, and giving him the name of your friend, or without any name being given, simply intending him in your mind, you make a present of food, clothes, and the like. This will undoubtedly please the original person intended. In like manner, should you sit knocking your shoe against a stone, and, while you do so, mentioning the name of an individual, continue to use abusive language, your conduct, when it becomes known, will certainly displease him. This being the case with the individuated spirit of man which is limited in its mode of existence, will not that God, who by his energy encompassing and pervading all things subsists invisibly,—for whose gratification the worship of images and the like is performed,—will not that merciful, all-knowing, and bountiful God be pleased with the services referred to? The illustration now given must be taken only in one point of view. This is the case with all illustrations. The point of the illustration must be observed, and beyond this the meaning of him that uses it must not be strained. The illustration which we have given, accordingly, does not in every point correspond with the subject treated of.

When a king has sent particular orders to his subjects, obedience to them secures their welfare, disobedience procures the reverse. In like manner, on hearing these orders, their minds are agitated by joy, or grief, or fear, as the circumstances may

determine. Now consider who excites these feelings. Should it be said that the king does so, it may be replied that he is not present. The King's commandment is not the king himself. There must, therefore, be some strange power in the commandment itself. As in medicines and many other things there is power of various kinds, so it must be concluded that in testimony there is a power also. If, then, it is admitted that there is power in human words, it cannot be doubted that there is power in those which are divine, and altogether true and faithful. In these circumstances, by means of the *Mantras* the Deity is, according to the rules laid down in the sacred books, called into the image, and thus the immaterial God obtains an imperceptible imagined body. When he is thus endowed with a body, he is, according to the rules laid down in the sacred books, treated as one having a body, and from the experience of this treatment he derives pleasure. By this means merit is obtained. We conclude, therefore, that by the due performance of image-worship and similar good works, God is found and enjoyed. Such a conclusion is immediately deducible from the sacred books; but it can be established by reason also.

You will say that all this is to be received, implicitly,—that there is nothing tangible about it. I reply that those whose attention is fixed night and day on the image, to them the form of God makes its appearance. Such individuals there are at the present day; but, as their affections are occupied with God alone, they do not go about saying to every one—"Hear, hear, what we tell you is truth, all truth, and nothing but the truth". On this account a number of heterodox doctrines have arisen, and many objections to the ancient doctrine have been conjured up. All these objections are false. When one, who has obtained the true knowledge of God, but speaks of him, the doctrine he teaches is immediately impressed upon the mind; whereas those, who though inwardly given up to the pleasures of sense, outwardly assume the garb of instructors and teach false doctrines to the people, are to be regarded as altogether worthless. The objections made by such individuals to that

true religion, which has been practised in India from the first of time, are no greater than a mosquito lighting upon an elephant. But of what significance are the objections of these men? Thousands of disputants, with kings on their side, have argued the same point, and all their objections have been triumphantly refuted by the adorable Shankaráchárya and his illustrious followers. Their arguments are given at length in Sanskrita books. From an ignorance of them some of the faithful may be deceived. I therefore just make a short statement on the subject.

For the removal of that ignorance, in which the soul of man is involved, through the influence of which it has forgotten its own nature, and that of God, and wanders about stricken with the arrows of desire, anger, and the like,—for the removal of this ignorance, and the realization of the knowledge of the true God, image-worship and several stated observances, are prescribed in the sacred books. It may be said that the image-worship, and stated observances, which at present prevail among the Hindus, and that the images of the Gods which they worship, are calculated in every way only to increase more and more the ignorance complained of, and the evil passions that arise from it. Wisdom and the virtue that springs from it can never be obtained by means of them; because, with whatsoever object the mind may be conversant, it acquires, from its attaching itself to it, the nature of that object. If, therefore, the knowledge of God is to be obtained, its attention must be directed to God. By directing it to several gods, the knowledge of the one God can never be acquired. The same is to be understood of stated observances. To remove this objection, many answers are given in the Hindu Sacred Books: as for example, that observances are to be put an end to by observances; that the work of the hands is to be done away by handy work; that the imaginations of the heart are to be borne down by the heart's imaginations; that poison is to be neutralized by poison. Fully to illustrate this would swell the present work to an undue size. Intending to confine myself, therefore, to the common practice of men, all that I shall do at present is to mention the expedients used in other religions, which will

clearly explain the answers I have given above. Among Musal-
mans only one God is spoken of. While this is the case, they
put their confidence in those men who have been distinguished
by their wonderful achievements; and they tell us that by this
means their minds are the better drawn towards God and fixed
upon him. So with respect to several of their observances,
which appear so like those of the Hindus, the purport of their
remarks is this—that they are useful in bringing the mind to
the purely spiritual God as its ultimate object. Among those
who hold the doctrine of Christ, one God is first set forth. Af-
terwards this same God, with a view to the salvation of the
creature, that is, its deliverance from all attachment to the visi-
ble world, and its attainment of a state of fixed contemplation
of the spiritual God, is represented under three forms, which
are respectively denominated—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
These forms viewed independently differ exceedingly from each
other; and that which is distinctive of each of them cannot for
a moment be tolerated if applied to the one true invisible God,
who is endued with supreme excellence, replete with all quali-
ties, and possessed of all power. As for example the Holy
Spirit purifies the hearts of men, that is, of those who embrace
that religion. He is indeed said to be without form or figure
like the Father; but in reality his forms are many and various.
Sometimes he becomes like a pigeon. At other times he be-
comes like fire. When we look to the Son, we find that he is
sometimes in the form of word,* and sometimes, again, he as-
sumes a mortal body, composed, like ours, of the five elements,
[earth, water, fire, air, and ether;] and the reason of this is
stated to be that in his spiritual form he cannot accomplish the
salvation of spirits encompassed with material bodies. Having
thus assumed a body he is brought into a state inconsistent with
the greatness and glory of God,—a state open to reproach, and

* "In the beginning was word. That word was in the heart of
God; and the same word was manifested in the world in the form
of Christ". In one place there is a sentence of this description.
Note by Mora Bhatta. It may be right to observe that this sen-
tence, which is literally rendered from the *Hindu-dharma-sūtr*,^h
is to be found, in this perverted form, in none of the Maráṭhi
Translations of John's Gospel.—J. W.

altogether incongruous. He is born in the womb of a mother; he becomes a youngling like any other creature; he experiences the good and ill of mortal existence; he suffers, in like manner, the punishment of a malefactor, and dies a reproachful death: by these and other means he procures the favour of God, and thus accomplishes the salvation of men. Those who hold these doctrines maintain that, while all these things are done, and all these forms assumed, the unity of God is undestroyed, and that to him there is a large revenue of glory. This is *their* avowed belief. If, then, these three Divinities occasion no bewilderment of mind, but establish the creature in the worship of the one God, how can the worship of Râma, Krishna, and other gods, occasion an ever-growing bewilderment to us? By means of their worship why may not the mind acquire the power of fixing its contemplation on the purely spiritual, formless, all-sustaining, and infinite God? You will say that these gods are worshipped by us through the medium of stones, water, trees, and animals, and thus lose their greatness and glory. I answer that through the medium of these things they have in love manifested themselves to men without any loss of honour; and how, then, can any such loss arise from their being worshipped through the same medium? If the loss complained of really be experienced, then why should God command us to worship him in this manner? In saying that the intoxicating juice of the grape,—the grain that springs from earth, which therefore is nought but earth, and which when eaten comes to the worst end,—in saying that these things are parts of his body, if God is not dishonoured, then how can his honour be tarnished by saying that fire, the cow, the *Shaligram*, (sacred black stone,) and other things so holy and purifying are his very glory? This reasoning, it may be said, appears to be good: but if image-worship, ablution and its accompanying ceremonies,—if observances of this description are intended to keep up the constant remembrance of God, to convey the knowledge of his real nature, and to preserve the mind from polluting objects, then let the attention be directed to those things which show forth the greatness, power, wisdom, goodness, and other perfections

of God; let it be directed to the sun, moon, and countless stars, —to the great fishes of the sea and of the rivers,—to the mountains and forests, and the wonderful creatures that inhabit them,—to the trees,—to the metals and other things formed by the hand of nature herself. Leaving all these, to enter a room, shut the door, take a piece of stone daubed over with paint, or a piece of metal or the like, sit down and call it God and honour it with many invocations—what sort of wisdom is there in this? On this subject we refer to that Jesus Christ, whom you account your Saviour, and who is therefore all-knowing. He will take our side of the question, and afford you all the satisfaction you require. The answers given in our books on this subject are probably too difficult for you to comprehend: I therefore do not mention them, but turn to what you will better understand. The qualities, and the power, of God are described in your books. If by reading or conversing about these, the remembrance of God is kept up and the removal of sin secured; or if this effect follows the view and the contemplation of the sun, moon, and other created things, then why should your Saviour command you to meet together in secret, or in one stated place? And as an image is liable to pollution, so in order to escape pollution from coming in contact with others, why should he tell you to meet together from time to time, to take a piece of bread, and muttering a few words to eat it up? and why should he order you to drink spirits? and why should he enjoin you to pour water on the head? Alas! the bread, the spirits, and the water, are all material things, and they can only affect the material body. But the affections, will, and other properties of the soul, or the soul itself, the real living principle, which, in its essence and subsistence, is beyond all matter, how can they affect? and how then from these things can merit and holiness result to the creature, and how can he by means of them obtain those qualifications that will entitle him to a state of *Nearness* to God and *Emancipation* from matter? The thing is altogether impossible. Yet, in spite of this, Christ urges it upon you to observe these ceremonies; and he who does not observe them, but merely reposes confidence in Christ, is not his wor-

shipper, and no one calls him so. It is by means of these observances, therefore, that the worship of Christ, that is to say, purity of heart, is realized. The divine command of which we speak is not given without a promise, nor is it to be observed without a reward. If, then, such excellence arises from these trifling ceremonies only occasionally observed, why should not he, who practises the ceremonies connected with image-worship and with those holy places to which pilgrims resort, which are of the same kind with those just mentioned, but incomparably greater, being observed by the greatest of men—why should not he be liberated from the condition of individuated spirit, and attain the nature of Deity itself? If from those pure spirits, or things of that nature, holiness is derived without the least admixture of intoxication, how can an increase of ignorance arise from the use of the pure water of the Ganges, and of water sanctified by the touch of Krishna's feet or from the contemplation of his image and those of others? If it is said that those spirits and that bread are merely emblematical of the body and blood of Christ, in other words are used merely to impress this doctrine on the mind—that believers in Christ are saved by the merit which he acquired by the wounding of his body, and the shedding of his blood, still the point for which we contend is established. If such is the effect of the use of these means, why, from the worship of the images of Rāma, Krishna, and others, should our memories not be aided? If by our own good deeds we cannot obtain salvation, the good deeds of Krishna, if we worship him in sincerity, will effect that salvation for us. With respect to this subject our opponents are accustomed to ask—When did Krishna perform any good deeds? In his behaviour, say they, there is nothing but sin; not a particle of righteousness is to be found. We answer that this is not the case with him alone. Of all the numerous gods which have sprung from the one God, and yet are no more than one God, (in the same manner as, though there are severally Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, there is but one God,)—of all these the procedure resembles a good deal that of Krishna. Krishna's committing theft with the cowherds, and playing the adulterer with

their wives,—Shiva's spreading death and destruction by his curses, and behaving indecently with Párvati,—Bramhá's looking on his own daughter with the eye of a paramour, and making a most filthy disclosure of his lust,—Ráma's crying out—"Sítá, Sítá", and embracing the trees in a fit of frenzy,—Paráshara's cohabiting with a fisherman's daughter;—such abominable transactions as these, too bad to be even mentioned,—Are these, you will say, what you adduce and place on a level with the good acts of Christ? What merit will accrue to you from listening to the tale that narrates them? and as for purity of heart, not the least of it can be obtained by means of them. As by listening to love-songs, lust is inflamed, and by hearing of the feats of Sindia and Holkar the spirit is stirred, so, by hearing of the deeds of the gods formerly referred to, men will only be prompted to wickedness. Regarding this objection we maintain, agreeably to the word of God, that all these deeds are so many virtuous actions in the gods that performed them. We maintain further that by hearing and speaking of them the ignorance of the imprisoned spirit, and its consequent subjection to passion are removed, and that thus they have as much power as image-worship itself to create in the soul pure and holy dispositions. These deeds, when narrowly considered, are even far better than those virtuous actions of Christ's that you mention. To you alone who view them with an evil eye, they appear vicious actions. Listen, then, to the argument by which we demonstrate them to be the very opposite. Good and bad actions are severally known by their results. The action, whose result, according to the decision of the True Sacred Books, is good, is a good action. That, whose result according to the decision of the True Sacred Books, is bad, is a bad action. Theft, when committed, is followed by punishment; therefore theft is bad. Instruction imparted to others secures honour to him that imparts it; therefore to impart instruction is good. In like manner death is the consequence of taking poison, and the preservation of the body is secured by eating bread and rice; therefore the former is bad, and latter are good. But should theft secure honour,—should wisdom

bring punishment along with it,—should poison preserve the body, and bread and rice occasion its death,—should such a state of things begin to be experienced, who would say that the committing of theft or the eating of poison was bad? and, on the other hand, who would say that the imparting of knowledge, or the eating of rice and bread, was good? A man may labour under deception: he may think that what is really poison is bread and rice, and what is bread and rice he may take to be poison; but, when he has tried them by eating them, he becomes acquainted with their real nature. Precisely in this way is it that some, labouring under deception, look upon the deeds of Ráma, Krishna and the other Incarnations as reproachful; while those, who consider them aright, regard them all as teaching wisdom, and leading to salvation. When the incarnations, &c. are attentively considered the difficulty of the accomplishment, and the necessity of the execution, of their several deeds, in the particular circumstances in which they were performed, are clearly seen. That Krishna committed adultery, that Ráma ran about in the forest crying out for his wife, that the Great Seer Paráshara also committed adultery, you believe to be true statements. Now, in the very books from which these statements are taken, it is distinctly declared that that *Emancipation*, which it is difficult for hermits with all their purity and holy deeds to obtain, was bestowed on the adulterous wives of the cowherds,—on those who assisted Krishna in his thefts, and on several others. Ha! Ha! Ha!—In the conduct of the adorable Rámachandra, again, there an exhibited veracity which calls forth the praises of all, gentleness, exceeding kindness to friends, obedience to parents in the most distressing circumstances, generosity, and infinite majesty. The incarnations never forget their own proper nature (as men do, who forget that they are incarnations of Deity and are ruined by the delusion consequent thereon;) and therefore no evil that befalls them in consequence of the incarnation does them any harm; just as the Divinity of Christ is not at all impaired by his taking a human body. With this part of the subject, then, you are well acquainted. Let it, therefore, be un-

derstood that it was from no influence of lust that Ráma went about seeking his wife; but it was to show that for one who is his in heart and soul he is ready to part with life itself,—it was to show this, and by doing so to furnish a motive to men to be instant in his worship, and it was also to accomplish the salvation of certain spirits that were held in bondage in the forest. His other actions, in like manner, have their appropriate object. From Paráshara's adulterous connexion with the fisherman's daughter there sprung a son, whose praise is in all the world, who accomplished the great work of collecting and arranging the *Védas* and *Shástras*. Such a son could never be produced in a marriage connexion, however, distinguished by excellence and purity. Why then should it be ever said that there was any adultery in the case? In accordance with the case now adduced, all the actions of the Incarnations and of others are recorded, in the *Puránas* to have been attended with a happy result. Some of these actions show the independence and omnipotence of God. Some actions, which were necessary in the circumstances in which they were severally performed, show the good and evil that spring respectively from virtuous and vicious actions. Of this the design is two-fold. The worshippers of God must practice virtuous actions in order to obtain admission into his presence; in order, therefore, to set an example before them some of the actions referred to exhibit goodness, patience, truth, wisdom, and other qualities, in perfection. Some of them show that certain things done even by the great, are to the human view productive of much evil to them, and accordingly leave no doubt of their evil consequences in the case of poor weak mortals. They are thus severally useful in setting an example of virtue, and in deterring from vice. How, then, can it be maintained that, by hearing of these actions, reflecting on them, speaking of them, and practising them, purity of heart will not be realized? and, if such is their effect, who can call such actions vicious? They are incomparably better and far more replete with merit than the actions of Jesus Christ. If you ask what is my reason for saying so, I reply by a reference to the work of Christ compared with that of our Incarnations.

Your doctrine is that when men could not obtain salvation by their own merit, God commanded his Son to come into the world for the salvation of men. He came accordingly, performed works of righteousness, at last gave his own life, and thus opened the door of heaven to men. From this it appears that, when the merit necessary for the salvation of men could not be obtained by their good works, he gave his life, and thus obtained it. Be it so. If by works merit is to be obtained, then putting the life in jeopardy is of no use; and not even a fool would set himself forward to do what is useless. Now our doctrine is this—that Ráma, Krishna, and the other incarnations, have for their appropriate object the salvation of the world; but without suffering pain at all to be compared with that of Christ, and without submitting to a reproachful death like him; they sported themselves at pleasure, and by these very sports accomplished the salvation of those that took refuge in their mercy, of those that worshipped them, or were otherwise connected with them. Let them do what they pleased, all their actions were full of merit: they did not need, therefore, like other dependent creatures, to perform appointed duties and thus acquire a measure of righteousness. They were complete incarnations of Deity, and were therefore possessed of the power we have just mentioned. We will afterwards speak of the independence of these incarnations. At present we ask you, only to consider whether these actions of Ráma, Krishna, and the rest, or those of your Jesus Christ are the better. To all this you may object by saying that, if the actions performed by Ráma, Krishna, and the other incarnations, were for the salvation of men, then why did they not like Jesus Christ, exhibit that forbearance, compassion, spirituality of mind, and blamelessness of life, which might be useful to promote their salvation? Why did they exhibit what was so dishonourable to God in committing theft, fleeing through fear, and becoming distracted on account of separation from others? When ignorant men see those wicked actions, the consequences of which are stated to be good, though not apparently so, will they not say within themselves—"These things have been done by the great: why

should not we do them",—and saying this will they not commence a similar course?

To remove this objection clear and convincing arguments have been already given. These, however, perhaps afford you no satisfaction. We ask you therefore, to lay aside party-feeling for a moment, and consider the conduct of your Saviour Jesus Christ; so, by the blessing of the adorable Krishna, you will perfectly understand the subject. To you who examine the actions of the incarnations of Deity with an eye suited only to the common business of life,—to you, would we remark, that the conduct of Jesus Christ has laid open the way of wickedness to men. If you ask how this is the case, we reply that Jesus Christ tells you only to believe in him, and promises on this condition to take on himself all your sins, whether old or new, and thus accomplish your salvation. Will not men, who are spontaneously given to sin, on hearing such a promise as this, believe in Jesus Christ, and prepare themselves to commit sin up to the full extent of their desire? When we tell you this, you will cry out—"No, no; you mistake altogether the meaning of the words—**BELIEVING IN CHRIST**. To believe in Christ is to obey his commandments. He that obeys, he it is that believes: otherwise faith cannot be said to exist". Will not, then the servants of Krishna, in obedience to his commandments, refrain from those actions which are in your opinion wicked? If you ask why Râma, Krishna, and the other incarnations, accomplished the salvation of men in this or in that particular manner, we ask you in return why God sent his Son into the world, and why, for the salvation of men, he brought him into a state so reproachful and so appalling. What! Had he no other ways of saving the world? You may say that there appears no other way of saving men without injury to the Divine mercy and justice, and that this way, therefore, must be taken. We reply that God is omnipotent, and that, by saying he had no other way of saving men, you fix an indelible stain on the glory of his infinite power. After bringing into existence principles and objects productive of sin, the moment it is produced and makes its appearance in the world, he must be-

come a man, a pigeon, or fire,—he must submit to unheard of sufferings! Why, pray, should he put himself to so much ado? To this if you reply that He did what seemed good to him, then you say precisely what we say ourselves—that Krishna and others did for the salvation of the world what they thought fit.

We do not seek to overturn the doctrines held by any one; for, as God has consulted the convenience of all people on the face of the earth with respect to food and clothing, so, for the inhabitants of different places, has he laid down different doctrines with a view to their salvation. Those doctrines, therefore, and those alone, according to which they severally worship God, are to them true. According to the nature of these several doctrines do they severally obtain reward from God. As long, therefore, as the inhabitants of India observe the ordinances prescribed to them in the sacred books here prevalent, they obtain the favour of God; and, on the other hand, the people here who embrace the religion of foreigners only depart farther from God. Of this we have experimental proof. Several years ago the people of one or two districts in the Konkan embraced a foreign religion.* Observe, then, what they gained by their new religion. Formerly, when common Hindus, they did not eat animals: when they had changed their religion, they began to eat them. Formerly they were not accustomed to drink at all: at the period referred to they threw away all shame, and commenced open drinking to intoxication and madness. Formerly they had some respect for others: they have now become as rude and disrespectful as possible. But why should we multiply examples of what is reprehensible among them? They are indeed horribly foul and loathsome. One would think they had just come out of Hell,†—murderers that they are, who, even when they are of no use for eating, kill beasts and birds in sport! Such are the excellent qualities by which these men

* Several years ago, the Portuguese converted to their own Christian Religion the inhabitants of the Goa and Bassein Districts, otherwise known by the names of Goa-kars and Christians.—*Note by Mora Bhatta.*

† The Hindus generally conceive of Hell as a place replete with ordure.

of this country are distinguished, and of which they became possessed in changing their religion; and it would seem that only those, who wish all these qualities to become their own would attend to the objections of foreigners attached to another religion, or think of embracing that religion themselves. If such is the feeling and desire of any, let men of minds so impure,—let them, I say, embrace the new religion with all their heart. Rather than remain under the restrictions of the religion of this country, and lose both this world and the next, let them by all means embrace the religion in which they may eat, and drink and enjoy themselves up to the full extent of their desire, and thus let them at any rate enjoy this world, though it is plain they must go to hell at last.

To this you will reply that he that forsakes his own religion does not do so without a reason. The objections which have been brought forward against his religion he may think true: it is your part, therefore, to remove them; and, when this is done, no one will change his religion. We reply—Plague on these objections! All that you object about God, committing theft and adultery in the incarnations of Krishna and others, we have already answered sufficiently by argument. But, if you want more argument on the subject, we are ready to give it to you: In the actions of God and the creature there is this difference, that the one acts independently, and the other is bound to act according to the Divine command. With that powerful being, therefore, who acts independently, it is altogether improper to find fault. When a fire has begun to burn one house, it would be idiocy to ask it why it burned another. No less idiocy is it to make the objections referred to. You may ask why, since God became incarnate in order to save men, he acted in such a manner. We reply that all he did tended directly to the accomplishment of that salvation, and that the work of salvation was all that occupied him. As a shopkeeper, with the view of bringing all the customers to his shop, keeps and exhibits a variety of articles, and this attracts them all to himself, so the incarnation of God takes many ways to accomplish the salvation of men. With whatsoever feeling any one desired and

held intercourse with the Divine incarnation Krishna, in a manner suitable to that feeling did the God hold intercourse with him, and it was in this way that he accomplished the salvation of all. Now should you ask why he committed theft, we answer that doing so is the glory of the Godhead, not its shame. He was the Lord of the Universe; and therefore whatever He wanted he took without scruple. The inhabitants of Gokúla too were so delighted with him that, on what pretence soever, they would have him to come to their houses; and, in order to gratify them, he used to go and steal. "Why did he do so? why did he not please them in some other way"? O ye wisecracks have we not already proved that all that God did was right and good? and who are you, great men, that come and propose that he should act precisely as you think fit? If you say that this is not at all your meaning,—that all you maintain is that he ought not to have been guilty of those things which are now immoralities among men, then we ask you why you should not go on to maintain that God must act like men in every respect?

In the history of those on whom men of other religious place their confidence, we find, as has been already clearly shown, actions of the same description as those just mentioned,—some at variance with the common opinion of mankind, some of a reproachful nature, and some strange and miraculous. Why did the incarnations perform a number of strange and miraculous deeds? why did not they act like other men? The answer given to this will equally apply to the objection that is taken to those parts of their conduct that to fools appear to be at variance with the common opinions of mankind. The argument stands thus. As the Being concerned is God and surpasses all in power, and therefore performs such miracles as men cannot perform, so is he superior to the control of any law, and therefore does such actions as men may not do.

A certain Christian Priest makes the following remarks:—"God is the Father of all mankind; and no Father gives opposite laws for the government of his children. God has given one Law; and therefore there is but one true religion, and one true written rule of religion; in the same manner as there is but

one Sun for this earth".* For this earth, indeed, there is but one Sun; but in the Universe are there not many Suns? How can the light of one Sun reach those fixed stars which are at an inconceivable distance from it? That they shine by their own light must be allowed on all hands. If a man have two sons, the one wise and the other foolish, will he give them rules according to their respective abilities, or will he give the same rules to both? Although he should prescribe to them different ways according to their talents, yet his intention is one, and that is—to make both wise. The same is true of God in his dealings with men.

Another Christian Priest writes as follows:—"In the Sacred Books of the Hindus the gods are said to have had Fathers and Mothers, and different works are ascribed to each, as, for instance, to Brahmá the work of creation, to Vishnu the work of preservation, and to Shiva the work of destruction, and so forth".† Now God is no where said to have had a Father and Mother. There is but one God, whose name in the Sanskrita language is Brahma: he is the one God. When this Brahma forms the desire of creating the world, he obtains the name of Brahmá; in the time of preservation he obtains the name of Vishnu; and at the time of destruction he obtains the name of Shiva. This appears evident from the names of all these gods bearing a particular meaning. From the Sanskrita root—*Vriha*,—which signifies *Increase*, is derived the word Brahmá; from the root—*Visha*,—which signifies *Encompassing*, is derived Vishnu; and Rudra [a name of Shiva] signifying *Destructive*, is a word known to all. The same is to be understood with respect to all the other gods. That God has a Father and Mother is indeed altogether false; and no where is it said that Brahma sprung from any one. When, however, he became incarnate, he had a Father and Mother, and in this there is nothing surprising.

* This is a partial quotation from a Report of Discussions, held in Bombay, in June 1830.—J. W.

† A passage similar to this occurs in a tract which I remember having given to Morn Bhatta. The words are those of a Brahman converted many years ago in the Madras Presidency.—J. W.

Jesus Christ, too, sprung from a woman: he did not fall down from heaven. It is, however, the way of all men to expose the faults of others however small, and never to look to their own however great.

In the late Discussions in Bombay, a certain Christian Disciple made the following observation:—"In order to punish men God does not need to take an incarnation". Excellent remark, indeed! God needs to send his Son to establish the true religion, and to suffer death; and the only thing he needs not do is to take an incarnation.* A man, who could speak in this manner, speaks because he has got a mouth; that's all.

When the whole subject is thus considered, not a single objection remains. This being the case, the person, that still thinks he sees something objectionable in the religion advocated, must attribute this unhappy circumstance to the sin of this or of a former birth. The man who could idly suspect his mother of adultery, when he himself was conceived in her womb, is the only man fitted to suspect and object to his own religion,—the religion of this vast continent of India. Our desire, therefore, is—that these arguments, written for the benefit of the people, may, through the blessing of God, become in some measure useful to bring such a one to a knowledge of the true religion.

* In order to punish men?

(END OF THE BHATTA'S TRACT.)

EXPOSURE
OF THE
HINDU RELIGION.

HINDU-DHARMA-PRASID'DHIKARANA.

MORA BHATTA DANDEKARA, with the aid of other Bráhmans, has lately composed a work in the Marát,hì language entitled "The Verification of the Hindu Religion", and called upon me to give a reply. I rejoice on account of its publication, and having read it with the greatest attention, I now beg leave to express my sentiments respecting it. I consider, that its author has fallen into the most serious errors; and while I endeavour to expose these errors, I solicit the candid consideration of my readers. The questions which come before us for discussion respect the Creator of heaven and earth, and the salvation of the souls of men. They ought not to be trifled with, but to be viewed as subjects of the greatest importance. They ought to be treated with humility, with the desire of discovering and receiving the truth, with the most anxious application, and with the

prayer, that God may enlighten the mind. No offence should be taken at the facts which are stated. They should be viewed with patience; and the decision pronounced upon them ought to accord with justice. Let the all-seeing God be our Helper!

The author of the *Hindu-dharma-stápaná* remarks in the commencement of his tract, that "all men, having, according to their inclination, made minute inquiry practise the observances of religion". I do not see, however, that this is the case. [The generality of mankind, in this country in particular, make little or no inquiry on the subject, and ask nothing about the evidence of religion. They regulate their practice according to the faith which they repose on the words of their parents, and the doctrines of their priests. This procedure is in perfect conformity with what the Bhatta himself admits. He remarks that "all men are naturally stubborn, sinful, and ignorant"; and hence, it is not to be wondered at, that many persons should be found conducting themselves according to a false religion; that they should imagine that by that religion they will be saved; and that they should shew no disposition to enter into the true religion. Were they to make every inquiry in their power, we should undoubtedly see them turn to the right way; but if they make no inquiry, and continuing in ignorance, search not for wisdom, it is not to be expected that they should discover the truth.

The Bhatta remarks that, "Ignorance of religion and of the marks of its truth and falsehood has been more and more prevailing: at such a disadvantageous time were we to remain in silence making no reply to what people of another religion have published, the most serious calamity would in no great length of time be the consequence". He assigns this as his reason for taking up his pen; and since his belief is of the nature described, he cannot be blamed for so doing. Let both sides of the question be made manifest, and then there will be a ground of judgement. People will be able to compare, and to come to a decision.

The Bhatta ascribes the injury which has accrued to the Hindu religion to a diminishment of learning among the Hindus. I am not singular in the opinion, however, that the spread of true learning in India will prove the ruin of the Bráhmancial faith. The discoveries of science, and the revelations of the Puránas are completely opposed to one another. Let a few examples be taken into consideration. The earth, which is globular, is described in the Puránas as possessed of the shape of a lotus, and as nearly level. From science, it is learned that the earth is suspended in space according to the will of God; but it is described in some Puránas as resting on the back of a tortoise, and in others as resting on the serpent *Ananta*. Its circumference is measured by about 12,434 *kroshas*; but its diameter according to the Puránas

extends to 500,000,000 *yojanas*.* The earth is about 47,000,000 *kroshas* distant from the sun, and it is said in the Puránas to be merely 100,000 *yojanas* distant. The earth is only about 120,000 *kroshas* distant from the moon, and yet it is described in the Puránas as 200,000 *yojanas* distant. It is impossible to enumerate the contradictions of this kind, and the absurd fictions contained in the Puránas about the egg of Brahma and other matters of a like nature. The Veda even contains blunders as great as those alluded to,—as, for instance, it says that rain comes from the moon. O (Verily in the word of God no such errors could ever occur.)—True learning is doing much to overturn the Hindu religion. This may be proved from what is going on at Calcutta at the present day. Many rich and well informed men in that place appear to be ready to forsake it. Madhob Chandra Mulik, writes thus respecting it, in a public newspaper—“If there be any thing under heaven, that either I or my friends look upon with the most abhorrence, it is Hinduism; if there be anything that we regard as the best instrument of evil, it is Hinduism; if there be any thing that we behold as the greatest promoter of vice, it is Hinduism; and if there be any thing that we consider the most hurtful to the peace, comfort, and happiness of Society, it is Hinduism”.†

* A *krosha* may be reckoned as two miles, and a *yojana* as four *kroshas*.

† This quotation is taken from the “Enquirer”, a native newspaper published in English at Calcutta. The periodical from

The Hindus generally admit that there is one Supreme God. In the course of his reasoning, Mora Bhatta frequently alludes to this Being, and speaks of his perfections. He describes him as "without form", "infinitely powerful", "omniscient", "the source of being, power, and happiness", and "the infinite Ishvara". On this point, I agree with him; but I differ from him when he says that he who is spoken of in the Hindu Shastras as Brahma is God. The term Brahma is applied in these writings to other objects than God. In the Veda, it is applied to "wind", to "mind", to "food", to a "servant", and to the "wicked". In

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a certain place Garuda is considered as Brahma; and it is said respecting him, "Thou art the Lord of all things movable and immovable". In the Gítá there is the following Shloka:—

ममयोनिर्महद्ब्रह्मतस्मिन् गर्भं दधात्महं ॥

"The great Brahma [says Krishna] is my womb; in it I place my foetus". Since the Shástras and the Bhatta describe Brahma as "destitute of qualities", he cannot in this character be recognized as the Supreme God.*

The Bhatta observes that, "Brahma in the act of creation is Brahmá, in the act of preservation Vishnu, and in the act of destruction Shiva"; that Brahmá, Vishnu, and Shiva are only names with particular meanings; and that the ascription of parents is only applicable to Brahma's Avatars.† On this view of the subject many objections present themselves. I shall briefly mention a few of them. In the Matsya Purána, there is following Shloka:—

गुणेभ्यः क्षोभ्यमाणेभ्यश्च यो देवा विजज्ञिरे ॥

एकामूर्तिश्च यो भागाद्ब्रह्मा विष्णुमहेश्वराः ॥

"From these three qualities (truth, passion, and darkness,) in a state of excitation, were produced the three gods united in one form, namely, Brahmá, Vishnu, and Shiva". On this fabrication, a convert made the following remark at the late discussions in Bombay. "In the Hindu Shas-tras, it is written that God was at first destitute of qualities, and that afterwards he became pos-

* See Appendix B.

† See Page 27.

possessed of *Satva*, *Raja*, and *Tama*. In this statement three difficulties occur. The declaration that God was destitute of qualities tends highly to his dishonour, and I am unable to understand, if he was destitute of power, and other attributes, how he could become possessed of them. The ascription of *passion* and *darkness* to God is nothing but the reproach of his character.* In the story respecting the origin of the *Trigunatma* contained in the *Matsya Purāna*, there is abundant absurdity. But the wonder does not stop here. The most contradictory accounts are to be found on the subject in other places. It is declared, that *Brahmā*, *Vishnu*, and *Shiva*, sprung from *A'dishakti* who brought forth the three gods; and that after having become desperately in love with them, she took them for her husbands. In the *Bhāgawata* and other *Puranas*, it is stated that a water lily sprung from the navel of *Vishnu*, and that *Brahmā* sprung from its flower. In some *Puranas* it is stated, that *A'dishakti* produced a seed, from which sprung *Shiva*,—the Father of *Vishnu*. In the *Matsya Purāna*, mentioned above, it is stated, that *Shiva* was created by *Brahmā*, according to the *Shloka*:—

ततोऽसृजदामरेव विष्णुस्त्वरधारिणं ॥

* Dr. Taylor in his translation of the *Prabodha Chandrika* makes the following remark on this subject:—"The question, How does desire or volition arise in this simple Being forms the subject of many disputes; but I believe that even the subtlety of Hindu Metaphysics has not yet furnished a satisfactory reply".

“Afterwards he (Brahmá) created Vamadeva the illustrious holder of the trident”. In the Náradiya Purána, it is said that from the right side of Náráyana, Brahmá arose, from the left Vishnu, and from the middle Shiva. In the Linga Purána, it is mentioned that, from the egg of the Universe, Shiva having assumed a form, produced from his left side Vishnu and Lakshmi, and from his right side Brahmá and Saraswatí. In the Linga Purána, moreover, it is said that Brahmá unable to carry on the work of creation began to cry; and Shiva, under the name of Rudra, was produced from his sighs, and that when Shiva began to create, the work dragged on so heavily that his father was forced to resume it. In the Márkandeya Purána, it is stated that Brahmá was derived from Maha Lakshmi, Shiva from Mahakali, and Vishnu from Maha Saraswatí. In the Varáha Purána, it is affirmed that from Brahmá, Vishnu, and Shiva a Shakti was produced; and that she, having been divided into three parts, became Lakshmi, Saraswatí, and Kali. Which of these stories is to be believed? Amidst these various and conflicting accounts, how can the human mind possibly find repose? If God were to make a revelation of his will, for the purpose of pointing out the true way, it is certain that no such incongruities as these would ever appear in it.

The same bewilderment which is experienced on the consideration of the accounts contained in the Hindu Shastras respecting the origin of

Brahmá, Vishnu, and Shiva, is experienced on the consideration of the statements made concerning their respective *dignity*, and *rank*, and *service*. Now adays, little need be said respecting Brahmá, because, for the reasons which will be afterwards stated, the Hindus in general seem to have forsaken his worship. The claims of Vishnu and Shiva, however, none can determine. The writers of the Vedas, Shastras, and Puranas are completely at loggerheads on the subject, as may be proved by the following Shlokas. In the Veda, it is thus written:—

सर्वव्यापीसमगवान्मासासर्वगतःशिवः ॥

“He who is every where present is the Supreme God; and therefore as Shiva is omnipresent, *He* is the Supreme God”. In the Bhágavata we find the following Shlokas directly opposed to the Veda.

भवन्तधरायेववेचनान्मनुजव्रताः ॥

पादांश्चिबोभवंतु यथाहपरिपंचिनः ॥

मुमुक्षुवेषोरक्षान्दित्वाभूतपतेर्गय ॥

नारायणकृपाः प्राप्ताभर्जतिह्यनुस्रवः ॥

“Those who are devoted to Bhava (Shiva) and those who follow their doctrines, are justly esteemed heretics, and enemies of the true Shástra. Those who desire final Emancipation forsake the hideous lords of the devils, and looking to Náráyana worship him with a mind at peace, and free from envy”. In a particular part of the Padma Purána, this same Shiva is thus praised:—

विष्णुर्देवमात्रेण शिवद्रोहः प्रजायते ॥
 शिवद्रोहात्तस्य देहेन रक्तं चांतिदाहणं ॥
 तस्मान्न विष्णुना मापिन वक्तव्यं कदाचन ॥

“From even looking at Vishnu, the wrath of Shiva is kindled, and from his wrath we fall assuredly into a horrible hell; let not therefore, the name of Vishnu ever be pronounced”. In the same Purána, there occurs the following passage:—

यस्तु नारायणं देवं ब्रह्मरुद्रादिदेवतैः
 सममन्यैर्निरीक्षेत स पाषांडी भवेत्सदा ॥ ४
 किमच ब्रह्मोक्तेन ब्राह्मणाद्येष्टवैष्णवाः
 न स्युः सृष्ट्या न वक्तव्या न द्रष्टव्याः कदाचन ॥ ५

“Let him who says that other gods such as Brahmá, Rudra, and the like are equal to Náráyana be for ever a heretic”. On this subject, much need not be said. Those Brahmans who are not attached to Vishnu ought never to be touched, nor spoken to, nor looked at”. In the Veda, Shiva is called Mahadeva. In the Padma Purána, again, Vishnu is praised in the following style:—

येन्यदेवंपरत्वेन वदंति ज्ञानमोहिताः
 नारायणाज्जगन्नाथान्ते वै पाषांडिनस्तृताः ॥ ३

“Those who say that any other God is greater than Narayana the Lord of the world, are ignorant and deluded, and also bear the name of Heretics”. In a certain place we have this Shloka:—

एष देवो महादेवो विज्ञेयस्तु महेश्वरः
 न तस्मात्परमं किंचित्पदं समधिगम्यते ॥

“That God Mahádeva is to be known as Maheshvara, to whom no object is to be held Superior”. In another place we have the following Shloka contradictory of the preceding:—

वासुदेवंपरित्यज्यथोन्यदेवमपासते
हविर्तो जाम्बवीतो रेकूपं खनति दुर्मतिः ॥

“He that forsakes Vāsudeva (Vishnu) and worship another God, is like the fool who when thirsty sits digging a well on the banks of the Ganges”. I must here conclude. Were I to proceed in this way to make quotations, this publication would increase to the size of a Purána.*

The accounts which are contained in the Hindu Shastras respecting the qualities and character of Brahmá, Vishnu, and Shiva, are no less absurd than the description of their origin and rank. These three imaginary gods are represented, in many places, as foolish, as weak, as mean, as proud, as envious, and as disputatious. They fight with one another like evil men, and ravenous beasts. They resort to the spread of atheism, and other evil expedients, in order to support their thrones. They abandon shame, and exhibit themselves as lascivious adulterers,—as deceivers, liars, thieves, and drunkards. Few sins in short can be mentioned, which they have not committed.†

* See Appendix C.

† Much has lately been written on the affinity of the Ancient and Hindu Mythology. The moral character of the gods at least, it is worthy of observation, is exactly the same. Ci-

Of the business, and unworthiness of their conduct, and weakness of their character, as forming the *TAIMUATI* let the following narratives suffice. Anusúyá, the wife of Atri the Rishi, was the most eminent among women for conjugal fidelity. With a view, therefore, of seducing her, and spoiling her virtue, Brahmá, Vishnu, and Shiva, repaired to her house, in the form of beggars, and asked an alms. She immediately came with it, and offered it to them. They told her that they would not receive it, and proposed that she should undress herself and serve them up a dinner, threatening that, unless she did so, they would leave her just as they were. Having asked the advice of her husband, she assented to their proposal; and having made dinner ready, she invited them to partake of it. Before they sat down, however, she sprinkled water on them, and turned them into children. They then dined; but, while they did so, they became heartily ashamed of what had happened. After dinner, she put them to sleep in a cradle. Nárada, being aware of these circumstances, went and related them to their wives, who were greatly distressed

cero thus represents the poetical descriptions of the Divinities of Greece and Rome:—"Nec enim multo absurdiora sunt ea, quæ poetarum vocibus fusa, ipsâ suavitatem nocuerunt: qui et irâ inflammatos, & libidine furentes, induxerunt Deos: feceruntque ut eorum bella, pugnas, prælia, vulnera videremus: odia præterea, dissidia, discordias, ortus, interitus, querelas, lamentationes, effusas. in omni intemperantiâ libidines, adulteria, vincula, cum humano genere concubitus, mortalesque ex immortalibus procreatos". *De Natura Deorum. Lib. I.*

by the intelligence, and immediately came to the door of Anuśṛyā's house, and solicited charity. She requested them to recognize their several husbands, and take each her own. No sooner had they begun to look on them than all the three children appeared perfectly alike. The goddesses then besought Anuśṛyā to point out and give them their respective husbands. Upon this she made a son possessed of the three qualities, commonly known by the name of Dattatrēya, and reserved him for herself, and then gave them their several husbands.—When Lakshmī came forth from the sea of the milk, the three gods became desparately enamoured of her, and furiously strove to possess her. On account of the austerities of Divodāsa they were all distressed, and obliged, in order to remove their fears, to resort to the spread of sin!*. They were unable to resist the power of Shumbha and Nishumba! Rājā Rājeshvari is represented as sitting with a foot of her tripod upon the head of each of them!

The character of the three gods, considered as ~~INDIVIDUALS~~ is no less unfavourable than that which is exhibited by the preceding accounts. To prove this point, I here insert a few of the stories contained in the Hindu Śāstras. Nothing but a feeling of shame prevents me from being more particular.

Mora Bhatta says that "Brahma in the act of

* A translation of this legend is to be found in Kennedy's *Researches into the Affinity of the Ancient and Hindu Mythology*. A few extracts will be found in the Appendix D.

creation is BRAHMA'." But who is this Brahmá? Like the other gods, Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Yakshas, Giants, &c. he was accustomed to drink ardent spirits. In a fit of intoxication, he made an attempt on the virtue of his own daughter. According to some Puránas, he lost one of his heads for this abominable act. According to the Padma Purána, however, it is said that Shiva, with the nail of his left hand cut off one of his heads, because he had failed to give him proper honours. In the Matsya Purána, it is declared that he lived with his own daughter for a hundred years of the gods. When he was celebrating the marriage of Shiva and Párvatì he made a most shameful disclosure of his lust. In some of the Puranas, it is directly said that he was cursed on account of his sins. In the Skanda Purána there is the following story. The Linga of Shiva fell by the curse of the Rishi, and increased to such a height that it filled heaven and hell. In order to see it, Brahmá, Vishnu, and the other gods assembled, and in the midst of their wonder, they called out, Who can reach to its extremity. Vishnu descended to hell, and Brahmá went upwards, in order to see it; but their search proved unsuccessful. Brahmá under the influence of shame, however, hired the Cow Káma and the tree Ketaki as false witnesses, and asserted three times that he had seen the end. The gods knowing the falsehood of his declaration deprived him by their curse of all his worship in

this world.* The Hindas on this account build no temples for him, and influenced by shame, give him no *Pûjâ*. The Bhatta asks, "Who will suspect the divine testimony given by Brahmâ the primeval male". The answer is ready. Every person who has any regard to truth, will both suspect and reject it. The words of a falsifier cannot be trusted.

According to our disputant, "Brahma in the act of preservation is Vishnu". This "God" is also chargeable with sin. Every person is acquainted with the manner in which he procured his wife Lakshmi. At the churning of the ocean, Akâbâi and Lakshmi arose at the same time. Vishnu perceiving Lakshmi to be the youngest and most beautiful wished to marry her, but not being able to accomplish his object till the elder was disposed, he deceived of the Rishi Uddaka and induced him to marry Akâbâi. He then obtained Lakshmi. In the Purâna which is called by his name, it is related that Tulasî a female, who had long practised austerities, solicited him to take her as his wife. Notwithstanding the opposition of his spouse Lakshmi, he gave his consent, and when Tulasî was turned into a plant; he even went so far as to promise that he would ever continue with her in the form of the Shâlagrama. In the form of the Deitya Jâlandhara he deceived his wife Vrîndâ.† In order to seduce

* See the Vâmana Purâna.

† The legend of Jâlandhara is contained in the Uttara Khanda.

another chaste woman, he assumed the form of a tree. In the distributing of the nectar, produced at the churning of the ocean, he broke his promise, deceived the Deityas, and, abandoning every feeling of shame, assumed the form of a beautiful woman for the purpose of attracting them, and bewildering them. He cut in two a Deitya who drank what he had been promised. By assuming the form Mohini, he deceived Shiva. In order to break the austerities of the wife of Brigu the Rishi, he cut off her head with his *Chakra*. Brigu consequently cursed him to seven births among mortals. His conduct in some of his Avatáras will afterwards come under our notice. The Bráhmans say that he is the Satva Guna. Like his brethren, however, he is absolutely filled with *Raja* and *Tama*.

The Bhatta mentions that "Brahma in the act of destruction is *Satva*". Were Párvatí here, she would give us the fullest account of the actions and habits of her lord; and if she would speak of him, as she is said to speak to him, we should not be required to write a line respecting him. He treated her with no great respect when, on the day of his marriage, he rode with her naked through the village Kamarúpa. She was frequently obliged to administer rebukes to him

da of the Padma Purána. A translation of it is to be found in the eighth number of the Quarterly Oriental Magazine; and in the Appendix to Kennedy's Mythological Researches. The impurity of the fourteenth chapter forbids its quotation in this place.

for his evil habits, particularly in begging in a disreputable part of Shivapura, and associating with prostitutes. She and her sons were often almost starved to death by his laziness and neglect in his trade of begging. She was almost ruined by his habits of intoxication, in which he indulged to such a degree as to redden his eyes. She was obliged to dandle him on her knee, and to repeat the *Mantras*, in order to restore him from his insensibility produced by his drinking the poison which arose from the sea of milk. She got no relief from him when Shani reduced their sons Ganesha's head to ashes. She had occasion to lament over his misfortunes, and wickedness, when he danced naked before Atri, in order to break his contemplations; and when from the curse of that Rishi, he experienced the signal punishment, which I am ashamed to mention, but with which many are unhappily too well acquainted. He was ready to part with all the merit he had acquired by his austerities in order to gratify his evil desires but once with Mohini. The following story will particularly unfold some of his other practices, and misdeeds.

King Daksha, the son of Brahmá, had sixty daughters. The youngest of these, Dāksháyani was given in marriage to Shiva. Daksha became enraged when he saw the habits of his Son-in-law. A beggar,—a person smearing his body with ashes, living where the dead are burned, and wearing a necklace of human skulls, was regard-

ed as a most dishonourable relative. The greatest enmity was, therefore, on both sides cherished. Daksha made a great sacrifice at his own abode, and invited all the Rishis, Gods, and Kings. Dākshāyani saw her fifty-nine sisters on their way to the sacrifice, gliding through the air in heavenly cars in company with their husbands, and having their persons adorned with diamonds and jewels. The sight grieved her exceedingly; and the affront done her by her father, she could not brook. She, therefore, said to her husband—"Let us go to the sacrifice with the rest". "To go without an invitation", he replied, "is unworthy of the great. Therefore do not think of going even yourself. If you do, you will certainly lose your life". She could not rest, however, and therefore went without obtaining the consent of her husband. When Daksha looked upon her dirty and beggarly appearance, he abused her exceedingly. Feeling this intolerable, she threw herself into the fire, and was reduced to ashes. When Shiva was told by Nārada what had happened, he was greatly enraged, and, striking his matted hair on the ground, he produced an enormous Giant, who had three eyes, and who, from his great power, was called Virabhadra, and who was commanded to destroy the sacrifice of Daksha. Taking with him every species of devil, ghost, and hobgoblin, Virabhadra destroyed the sacrifice and cut off Daksha's head. Upon this Brahmā and Vishnu came bend-

ing as suppliants at the feet of Shiva, and at their request he put a goat's head on Daksha's body. Dākshāyani afterwards became the daughter of Himālaya Parvata (Mountain) from which she is called Pārvatī and was given in marriage to Shiva.* The very names of this imaginary God are indicative of his wickedness, and horribleness. He is called, *Krittivāsa*, he who wears a skin; *Ugra*, the furious; *Virūpāksha*, the hideous eyed; *Kapālabhrita*, the bearer of a human skull; *Bhūteshvara*, the Lord of the Devils; and *Bhūta*, a very devil.

Who can peruse the preceding narratives without shame? They are all extracted from the books reckoned sacred by the Hindus; but when rightly considered they form infallible and uncontrovertible proofs that these books did not come from God. This remark holds true whether it be alleged by the Bráhmans that they are statements of real occurrences, or whether it be alleged that they are merely allegorical descriptions. The theory of Mora Bhatta Dandekara concerning the exhibition of God by Brahmá, Vishnu, and Shiva, reflects the greatest dishonour on the Supreme Being. I shall afterwards shew that his attempts to excuse their sins are altogether futile. God will most certainly neither take such incarnations as these, nor tolerate his representation by such forms. They are

*The preceding story is related in almost the precise words of the Bhāgavata.

completely opposed to one another, and can have no connexion with the Supreme God. "If you say" says Braja Mohana, a native author at Calcutta, "that they are not separate beings, but one being under different forms, we reply, that if those gods with different bodies, different residences, different families, different objects of pursuit, influenced by love and by-hatred, now quarrelling with each other, and now making peace, are all one, and the same being, why may (not a brass utensil, a-mat, beasts, men, and every thing else in the world, be esteemed one and the same thing") "Before we acknowledge that those beings are the same which have different forms, colours, situations, desires, and actions, we must extinguish our eyes, ears, and all our faculties".*

Before I consider the excuses and palliations of the sins of Brahmá, Vishnu, and Shiva, proposed by my opponent, I must bring under review the conduct of KRISHNA, and RA'MA, who are likewise greatly praised, and strenuously defended by him. The subject of the sins of the gods, as far as it is treated by the Bhatta, will consequently be at once before us, and such a reply will be given as will best secure lucidness, and prevent repetition.

So highly improper, indecorous, and sinful, are the acts of KAMHNA, the Avatára of Vishnu, that his name in many districts of India, is proverbially

* See Appendix E.

ally applied to the most abandoned profligates and black-guards. He is described in the Shástras as lecherous. All know how he procured Rádhá, the wife of A'yanghoshá, the Veishya, and the manner in which he cohabited with her.

The phrase "Krishna Rádhá", is consequently applied to all which is base, and iniquitous? What but the most impure mind can read without shame the accounts of his lascivious sporting with the sixteen thousand milk-maids, and his vain, but disgraceful, endeavours to procure the horse of Dandá which was reported to have every night assumed the form of a beautiful woman?

He ought to be called a thief; for he frequently stole curdles, and other articles, from the milk-men, and he robbed a washerman of his clothes when he was proceeding to witness a sacrifice, and other individuals of necklaces, sandalwood, &c. He was so very quarrelsome that he was seldom out of broils needlessly engendered. He proved himself to be a liar, when he urged Yudhishtíra to tell a falsehood, and brought such a calamity upon him in consequence, that he lost his thumb, and was terrified by a sight of the torments of hell. He exhibited himself as a murderer by slaying his maternal uncle Kansa, and the washerman whom he had plundered, and by destroying his whole offspring. He subjected himself to the irremovable charge of weakness, and ignorance, by allowing himself to be slain

without his knowledge, desire, or consent, by the the arrow of Váli.*

The history of RA'MA CHANDRA is not so bad as that of Krishna. It is such, however, as is altogether unworthy of an Avatára of God. It marks his character as composed of selfishness, folly, ignorance, weakness, and sin. Though Rávana, the giant of Lanká, had long imprisoned, and oppressed the 330,000,000 gods, who are said to have worshipped Ráma, he never stirred a foot to liberate them. When his wife was stolen from him, however, he immediately became distracted, ran about the forest, ignorant of her fate, seeking her and bewailing her, embraced the trees in a fit of phtrensy, and immediately vowed revenge on him who had stolen her. He knew little which was not told him by Hanumána Sugriva, and others, and he could do little without their aid. In order to get the services of Sugriva, he wickedly shot an arrow and killed Váli when engaged with Sugriva in single combat. He was unable to leap like Hanumána across the sea from Ram-eshvara to Lanká, and he impiously threw a temple of Shiva into the sea to enable him to form a bridge, and led his army of monkeys over it, who trampled upon the god, and all his sacred paraphernalia. When flattered by Rávana, he promised unconditionally that he would never destroy him, but when the gods, through fear of losing their power, tempted Rávana to reproach him,

* Appendix F.

he destroyed him. Without knowing Mandodari, the chief wife of Ravana, when she came to him weeping on account of the death of her husband, he declared that she should never be a widow! For the trifling offence of admitting the sage Durvāsa into his presence, when he was conferring with Kālapurusha, he abandoned Lakshmana, and tempted him to destroy himself, and thus proved a bad brother. After having made a sufficient trial of his wife's innocence, by making her pass through the fire, he sent her into the forest to Vālmika, in a state of pregnancy, and thus proved a bad husband, and a bad father. He again made trial of her, and she was received into Pātala by her mother Prithivi. He ended his life by drowning himself.*

Such are some of the principal charges which I bring against the five principal gods of the Hindus. On considering them I must repeat, "I do not see a particle of merit in them." I shall now consider the arguments which the Bhatta adduces in their defence. In doing this, I shall give his observations the fullest weight. If I overlook, or unjustly treat, any of them, he will have an opportunity of giving any explanation which may be required.

1. The Bhatta maintains that the deeds objected to, according to the Hindu Scriptures, "are so many virtuous actions in the gods that performed them". I know very well that the Hin-

du Shástras characterize them as such: and it is on this very account that I unhesitatingly declare that these Shástras are false, and did not come from God. The bare assertion of the Shástras cannot be heard, in a case like this, any more than the excuses of a thief, who says that he does no harm in stealing, can be received in his vindication. The faults of the Shástras, which are innumerable, must be first removed, and their evidence must be first established, before we can rest on what they say. "If you believe a part of the Shástras", say some, "you must believe the whole of them. If you believe the Shástras when they say that such and such acts were committed by the incarnations of God, you must believe them when they say that in these acts there was no sin". In reply to this foolish assertion, I have only to say that neither could the incarnations of God commit the vile acts alluded to, nor could the books of God say that such vile acts were not sinful. Both matters, as they are exhibited in the Hindu Shástras, must be reckoned equally false and erroneous.*

2. It is further the opinion of the learned Mora Dandekara, "that by hearing, and speaking, of the actions formerly described, the spirit and its subjection to passion are removed; and that they have as much power as image-worship itself to

* The absurd reasoning to which I have here alluded is often resorted to even by the most intelligent Bráhmans. It will be observed from the translation of the *Hindu-dharma-sūtr* that *Mora Bhatta* himself practises it.

create in the soul pure and holy dispositions". He has not told us, and he cannot tell us, how by such expedients the evil dispositions of the mind will be removed. They may be almost as efficacious as idolatry; but this practice, as we shall shew, is decidedly sinful, and adverse to true worship.

3. The Bhatta endeavours to prove that the actions complained against are meritorious in the following manner:—"Listen to the argument", he says "by which we demonstrate their excellency. Good and bad actions are severally known by their results. The action whose decision according to the true sacred Scriptures is good, is a good action. That whose result according to the decision of the true sacred books is bad, is a bad action. Theft when committed is followed by punishment; therefore theft is bad, &c." I have no hesitation in saying that the ultimate issue of all sin, not removed by a Saviour, must be evil, and that continually; but I also say that sin will be known to be sin, although its ultimate result be not known. If a Rámoshi, who has been bred in some of the outlandish villages of the Mával,* and who is entirely ignorant of any Shástras, were to rob a Bráhmaṇ, beat him with his shoe, and otherwise abuse him, and at the same time escape all punishment, the Bráhmaṇ would nevertheless think him guilty of sin;

* The country above the Ghats, situated between the Konkan and Dakhan.

and were any book to say that the Rámoshi, had not committed sin, it would undoubtedly find no credence from the Bráhmaṇ. I go much further than this, however, and maintain that the stories of the Hindu gods, contained in the Shástras, show that in most instances, the issue of the actions was bad. This was the case with Brahmá, who lost all his merit by his incest; and who was cursed and lost all respect, and all his worship, and, according to some accounts, one of his heads, for his other sins. This was the case with Shiva, who, by his disgraceful and sinful conduct, lost all his domestic peace, and even his own manhood, and who became subject to a most tremendous curse. This was the case with Krishna. He was killed like a beast in the jungle, left without burial, and eaten by birds and jackals. Jagannatha, one of his forms, when asked, why he who was the "Lord of the world" had no hands, and no feet, replied that he was suffering for his wicked and foolish sports in Gokula. This was the case with Ráma, who finally lost his wife, his brother, and his children, and who in despair went and drowned himself. In all these instances, it is manifest the issue was bad; and, therefore, in all these instances, the conduct, according to Mora Bhatta Dandekara, was bad. He is caught in his own snare; and there is way of his escaping. It is of no use for him, consequently, to say that "the incarnations never forget their own proper nature; and therefore no

evil that befalls them in consequence of the incarnation does them any harm". He even allows that "some of the things done by the great persons (alluded to) are to the human view productive of much evil to them". It has been proved that the greatest harm has accrued to the gods from their actions; and nothing more need be said on the subject than that "the issue was bad, and that the actions were consequently bad".

4. The Bhatta apologizes for the sins of the Hindu gods, by remarking that they were attended, in some instances, with good to those who were connected with them. I make the following quotations respecting this point. "That Krishna committed adultery; that Rāma ran about in the forest crying for his wife; that the great Seer Parāshara committed adultery, you believe to be true statements. Now in the very books from which these statements are taken, it is expressly declared that emancipation, which it is difficult for hermits, with all their purity and holy deeds, to obtain, was bestowed on the adulterous wives of the cowherds, on those who assisted Krishna in his thefts and on several others. Ha Ha Ha!" "From Parāshara's adulterous connexion with the fisherman's daughter there sprung a son, [Vyāsa] whose praise is in all the world, who accomplished the great work of collecting the Vedās and Shāstras. Such a son could never have been produced in a marriage connexion, however, distinguished by excellence and purity.

Why then should it be once said that there should be any adultery in the case"? This reasoning is so utterly absurd, and the principles of morality on which it is founded are so loose, that were it not commonly used by the Hindus, I should not even have alluded to it. Who will say that sin ceases to be sin, because the sinner has the power of shewing favour to those who are sinned against? An injury does not cease to be intrinsically an injury because the person offended may afterwards be rewarded on account of his having suffered it. Emancipation bestowed by adulterers upon adulterous women for their adultery, and upon thieves for their thefts! Adultery is better than marriage for the production of sons of talent, and ceases to be sinful when engaged in for this object! How debased, false, and injurious must be the books in which this is stated! Let these principles be generally approved, and acted upon, and there will be nothing but violence, impurity and destruction,—the injury of intelligent creatures throughout the world, and the dishonour, and blasphemy of the Divine Being. I call upon every Hindu possessed of the smallest portion of intellect, and moral feeling, to mark, and forsake the horrible doctrines of their teachers, and sacred books,—doctrines which the Gurus are not ashamed not only to declare in private, but to publish as "ornaments" of their religion.

8. The Bhatta apologizes for the sins of the

Hindu gods by observing that some of their actions were good. "In the conduct of the adorable Rāma Chandra", he observes, "there are exhibited veracity which calls forth the praises of all, gentleness, exceeding kindness to friends, obedience to parents in the most distressing circumstances, generosity, and infinite majesty". "Let it be understood that it was from no influence of lust that Rāma went about seeking his wife; but it was to shew that, for one who is his in heart and soul, he is ready to part with life itself,—it was to shew this, and by so doing to furnish a motive to men to be instant in his worship, and it was also to accomplish the salvation of certain spirits that were held in bondage in the forest, &c." I have formerly showed how Rāma neglected his worshippers, when they were imprisoned; and that his deeds entitle him to no confidence. Not to speak of this, however, I cannot possibly see how my opponent can be benefited by a statement of the kind which he has made. It is the fact that any one sin has been committed, which shows that the person who has committed it is not, and cannot be, an incarnation of God; and, while it has been proved, that the Hindu gods have committed sins; and these of an enormous nature, their claims must be for ever dismissed. No person, even in reference to worldly matters, would trust in a man who was a known thief, liar, adulterer, and murderer. How much less then should those individuals be reckoned

gods and trusted in, and served, who have this character. "You must weigh their good and their bad deeds, however, together", said a Gujarát, h Bráhmaṇ to me one day in the presence of Mora Bhatta Dándekara, "and see which preponderates". He was informed that no judge in his senses would ever proceed in this manner with the persons charged at his bar. He would undoubtedly condemn them for the crimes proved against them, and punish them accordingly.

6. The Bhatta refers to the greatness of the Hindu gods as an apology for their sins. "In the actions of God and the creature", he observes, "there is this difference, that the one acts independently, and the other is bound to act according to the divine command. With that powerful being, who acts independently, it is altogether improper to find fault, &c." The answers to this reasoning are at hand. God is omnipotent, and God is independent of the creature; but he is not independent of his own nature. If he is holy, then,—and who without committing the greatest sin dare say that he is not?—he must act according to his holiness. This holiness consists in hatred of sin, and opposition to sin; and, being altogether perfect, can never be violated. It is the principle on which the laws given to men must be founded; for it is impossible to conceive that the Divine Being, who is infinite in all his perfections, and excellencies, could give any laws which are opposed to his own nature, and his

own desires. Those actions, then, of a moral kind which God has forbidden to his creatures, which he declares to be displeasing in his sight, and which he is determined to punish, must be viewed as directly contrary to his nature, and such as he can never perform. The man is guilty of the grossest impiety who would ever ascribe them to him; and those books which say that they have been committed by him ought immediately to be given to the flames. God could not be trusted were he not to be faithful to his own laws. He could not be perfectly loved, unless he were perfectly excellent. The nature of sin could not be known unless it were viewed as in every respect contrary to his character. If his example were unholy, it would spread disorder and destruction throughout the universe, and his moral government would be destroyed. The greatness of God could be no apology for sin on his part. It would positively be an aggravation of sin, as tending in an inconceivable degree to increase the detriment of that sin. The reasoning of the Bhatta is on these accounts completely a failure. Though it agrees with some statements in the Hindu Shástras, it is directly contrary to some others. In order to prove this fact, I make the following quotations from the Bhágavata Gítá:—
 “The man of low degree followeth the example of him who is above him, and doeth that which he doeth. I myself, Arjuna, have not, in the three regions of the universe, any thing which is

necessary for me to perform, nor any thing to obtain, which is not obtained; and yet I live in the exercise of the moral duties. If I were not vigilantly to attend to these duties, all men would presently follow my example. If I were not to perform the moral actions, this world would fail in their duty; I should be the cause of spurious births, and should drive the people from the right way. As the ignorant perform the duties of life from the hope of reward, so the wise man, out of respect to the opinions and prejudices of mankind, should perform the same without motives of interest. He should not create a division in the understandings of the ignorant, who are inclined to outward works. The learned man, by industriously performing all the duties of life, should induce the vulgar to attend to them".* These are the reported words of Krishna himself. I quote them not because I believe in the Gítá, for I have no hesitation in declaring that it never came from God; but because they ought to silence my opponent. I would also mention, that even although the reasoning of the Bhatta were

* I have here adopted Dr. Wilkins' translation, which is sufficiently accurate. In the Maráthí edition, the passage is quoted in the original Sanskrita. It was adduced in opposition to the Bhatta at the discussions alluded to in the preface. Though, many of the Bráhmans, who were present, were as familiar with it as with the alphabet, they felt its force tell so directly against the argument which they pursued, that some of them assured the other Hindus who were auditors, that it was not to be found in the Gítá! A Shástrí, however, confessed that the quotation was correct, and rebuked his brethren for their prevarication.

correct, it would be inapplicable to his purpose, because most of the sins of the Hindu gods, which I have mentioned, were committed not against the creature, but against other gods. Though it were admitted that the gods could do with creatures as to them might seem fit, it could not be admitted that they could quarrel with one another, curse one another, fight with one another, and injure one another, without sin. It is worse than trifling to say that they "merely engaged in play and sport". Iniquity most certainly cleaves, and must for ever cleave, to them. It is in vain to ask, "Why must God act like men in every respect". God will in every respect act infinitely better than men.

7. In order to defend the Hindu gods, Mora Bhatta has ventured on a comparison of the accounts given respecting them in the Hindu Shāstras, and the descriptions of God, and the incarnate Jesus, contained in the Christian Scriptures. There are several observations scattered throughout his tract on this subject. Had he prosecuted it to any extent, it would have been fatal to his cause, and he would have seen that he could not have adopted a more effectual way of bringing ruin on his own religion. In the remarks which he has made, there is nothing like a fair view of the subject, and there are several most important errors. He is correct, however, when he says that in the Christian Scriptures, "One God is set forth". This glorious being is represented in

these writings as possessed of every possible perfection, and adorned with every possible excellency. They unfold him as infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. They not only ascribe to him exalted and perfectly good attributes and qualities; but they shew us these attributes and qualities in constant operation. They exhibit him as the Creator,—not like the Hindu creators, labouring under the difficulties of his work, overcome with perplexities, and resorting to the meanest, and most foolish expedients, but calling worlds into existence by the word of his power, arranging them according to his will, and breathing into their various inhabitants the breath of life. They represent him as the Governor, not afraid like the Hindu deities, of losing his throne by the intrigues of his fellows, by the merits of men, or the efforts of devils; but as ordering all things according to the counsel of his will, as controuling and punishing the wicked; and as manifesting his glory by the very efforts which are made to obscure it. They represent him as the Preserver, not, as the Hindu Vishnu, degrading himself by deceiving the objects of his care, and participating in their sins; but as making a gracious and abundant provision for the supply of the wants of all his creatures, in the exercise of unspotted purity. They manifest him as the Saviour, not capriciously extending mercy in return for the miserable, and pol-

luted gifts, penances, and services of sinful and rebellious man; but as displaying through the work and merit of Christ, his justice and holiness, at the very time when he discovers his compassion, and saves, and sanctifies the guilty.

The doctrine of the Trinity, contained in the Christian Scriptures, as Mora Bhatta seems to be aware, destroys not the Unity of God; and, from the manner in which it is exhibited, the divine glory is exhibited. The Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, who are to be found in Him who is the only living and true God, have the same attributes, the same power, the same will, and the same glory. They never contend, like the Hindu gods, about their respective greatness. They never form, like the Hindu gods, separate purposes. They never endeavour to thwart one another in their several works. They have existed from all eternity in the relations in which they are at present. The Son, who is so denominated, not because of derived existence, for he is without beginning, but because he is of the same nature with the Father, because he is the object of the Father's love, and because he displays the Father's glory, assumed the soul and body of man that he might make an atonement for sin. In the state of his incarnation, and in the manifestations made by the Holy Spirit, there was committed no sin, and there was done nothing to disparage the godhead; and there took place nothing inconsistent with its omnipresence, and spiritual-

ity. There is nothing similar to the accounts of them contained in the bible, to be found in the stories of the Hindu Shástras, concerning Brahmá, Vishnu, Shiva, Krishna, Ráma, and others. This subject, and the observations of the Bhatta upon it, require particular consideration.

(1.) There is a great difference between the incarnation of Jesus Christ, and the reported incarnations of Ráma, Krishna, and others, in reference to their *object*. The purpose of the Ráma Avatára is said to have been the destruction of the giant Ravana, but this object must appear altogether trifling and inadequate. God who is infinitely powerful could accomplish it without becoming incarnate; for he who gives life, can take it away at his pleasure. The purpose of the Krishna Avatára is said to have been the destruction of the giant Kansa and others. This object is similar to that of the Ráma Avatára, and could have been accomplished without an incarnation. Krishna, moreover, continued in the world doing mischief long after it is said to have been accomplished. The purpose of the Christ-Avatára was the endurance of the punishment due for the sins of believers, the manifestation of the divine holiness and purity, and the exaltation of believers to a state of unspeakable glory and bliss. This was a great object, an object worthy of an incarnation, and an object, which, as far as our knowledge goes, we are warranted in saying could not have been accomplished without an incarna-

tion. "We reply", says Mora Bhatta Dandekara, "that God is omnipotent and that by saying that he had no other way of saving men, you fix an indelible stain on the glory of his infinite power". I maintain, in opposition to this argument, that the salvation of sinners, is not one with which mere power is connected, as is the case in the destruction of wicked giants; but it is one with which the justice and the holiness of God, his glory and majesty as the governor of the universe, and the moral good of intelligent creatures, are directly connected. Sin deserves punishment, and, consequently, if sinners be saved at all, it is manifest that their salvation must be effected in the exercise of divine grace, for it is only through the exercise of this attribute, that the fit punishment of sin can be averted. But a grand difficulty immediately presents itself. God is not only rich in mercy, but he is infinite in holiness and purity, and cannot, without the greatest detriment to the government of his creatures, deal with sinners, without shewing that sin is infinitely hateful in his eyes, that it is an evil of the greatest magnitude, and that, if persisted in, it must be attended with everlasting ruin. Nothing which the creature can do can remove the guilt of sin; for if man were to have the power of sinning, and of removing his sin, when he pleases, it is manifest that he would never continue obedient, and that angels and other intelligent beings, on seeing his conduct and success,

might be tempted to disrespect the divine authority, and to rebel against the divine law. A scheme of salvation must be resorted to in which the divine mercy, and the divine holiness and justice, must be alike displayed, the salvation of men from the power and punishment of sin accomplished, and the evil of sin most emphatically exhibited. Such a scheme is to be found only in Christianity. According to its fundamental principles, "God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life": Christ became the willing, and sufficient, surety and substitute of those whom God determined to save, and assumed a body and a human soul, without which he could not have suffered the punishment due for their sins. God is just in accepting the works, sufferings, and death of Christ, because being those of a divine person, they were infinitely meritorious. God in pardoning sin, for the sake of Christ, shows that it is an infinite evil, for, if he spared not his own Son, when he stood in the room of the guilty, he will not spare sinners when they stand on their own footing; and, because if sin is not restrained throughout the universe by the exhibition of God's dealing with Christ his own Son, it must be evident that sinners must infallibly be left, in all time to come, to suffer the punishment which is due to them.

(2.) There is a great difference between the in-

carnation of Jesus Christ, and those of Ráma and Krishna, in regard to their *conduct*. We have already seen that Ráma and Krishna committed the most flagrant sins; and it is manifest, that their history presents little to our view, but disputation, war, and destruction. In Jesus Christ, however, we see nothing but the display of perfect purity of character, the practice of that which is good, and the manifestation of the divine glory. He was born without sin, for he was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of a virgin. During the whole course of his life, he continued holy. He committed no evil action, he spoke no evil word, and he cherished no evil thought. He fell into no mistake. He employed himself in doing good. When he performed miracles, to confirm his mission, and to manifest the divine glory, the deaf by his word began to hear, the dumb to speak, the blind to see, and the lame to walk, and the sick to rejoice in their returning health. He walked upon the sea; and he raised the dead. For all his wonderful works, there was a suitable reason, and in connexion with them, no deception was practised. They are completely opposed to the reputed miracles of Krishna, which may be characterized as tricks, as extravagant, and unnecessary.* As the greatest instructor who ever appeared in the world, he declared without partiality the divine glory to all around

* See Appendix H.

him, whether rich or poor, high or low, young or old. He spoke with earnestness, authority, and power; and even his enemies confessed that never man spake like him. His doctrines were important; and they referred only to the character of God, the salvation of men, and other matters connected with them. In these respects, they were at an infinite distance from the reported conversations of Rāma, Krishna, and others, in which there are many trifles, and many blunders. Christ came into the world to suffer in the room of man, and, instead of "sporting himself at pleasure" like the Hindu Avatāras, he subjected himself to pain and suffering, which cannot be described. He voluntarily allowed himself to be nailed to the cross, took upon himself the load of the world's guilt, and gave his life as the ransom of his people. In all this humiliation we see the most striking condescension, and the most overwhelming love; and are led to trust in him and serve him. He continued in the grave for three days, — a time sufficient to convince the world that he had truly died. He then rose again by his own power, and, after instructing his disciples in the nature of his reign, and commanding them to proclaim remission of sins in his name throughout the world, he ascended in the sight of his disciples, with his body, to heaven. In the place where God especially manifests his glory, he continues as the intercessor and advocate of his people; and the prayers for the pardon of iniqui-

ty, the sanctification of the soul, and eternal joy, presented in his name, and with a reliance on his merits, find acceptance with the Father. The actions of Rāma and Krishna, when compared with those to which we have now alluded, are lighter than vanity. Let the wise men of the earth make full inquiry into the subject, and decide accordingly.

(3.) There is a great difference between the incarnation of Jesus Christ, and those of Rāma Krishna, &c. in regard to the *application of their benefits*. "If by our own good deeds we cannot obtain salvation", says Mora Bhatta Dāndekara, "the good deeds of Krishna, if we worship him in sincerity, will affect that salvation for us". We have already seen what was the object of this Avatāra; and it is impossible to conceive how the achievements of him, who is merely represented as a giant-killer, can be in the slightest degree available for the purpose here mentioned. He accomplished nothing which had any reference to the carrying away of the sins of mankind. The persons who preceded him in the world, and the persons who live in the present day, can receive no advantage from him of any kind. Christ, as we have seen, died for sinners, and suffered the punishment due for their transgressions. A promise of his advent, and work, was given to man on the entrance of sin into the world; and as he was the surety of man from the beginning, those who believed in him, and ex-

pected his advent, were saved through his merits. Those who have followed him and been acquainted with his history, have been saved by referring to what he has done, and by resting their confidence upon his righteousness. "The conduct of Jesus Christ", says the Bhatta, "has laid open the way of wickedness to men. If you ask how this is the case, we reply that Jesus Christ tells you only to believe in him, and promises on this condition to take on himself all your sins whether old or new, and thus accomplish your salvation. Will not men who are spontaneously given to sin, on hearing such a promise as this, believe in Jesus Christ, and prepare themselves to commit sin up to the full extent of their desire". The Bhatta seems to have been aware of his perversion of Christian doctrine, for he immediately adds, "No, no; you mistake altogether the meaning of the words believing in Christ. To believe in Christ is to obey his commands". He seems also to have been altogether unacquainted with one of the first principles of Christianity, that Christ is the Saviour from the power, and dominion of sin, as well as from its punishment. In the gospel, there is an offer for pardon, but this offer can be received only by those persons who acknowledge the holiness, justice, and goodness of God's law, who are ready to love the Saviour, and are inclined to obey him; who can have no peace, and no hope, in a state of absolute disobedience; who receive the Holy Ghost, who enters

into their souls, purifies them gradually from their evil desires and passions, and prepares them for heaven, into which nothing which is impure can enter, and in which nothing which is impure can dwell. No other religion makes any provision for securing holiness, but the Christian. It is the special work of the spirit, whom we have just mentioned, to make the soul holy; as it is the work of the Father to send his Son into the world, and the work of the Son to give his life for the ransom of men.

(4.) There is a great difference between the Avatára of Jesus Christ, and the reported Avatáras of Ráma, Krishna, &c. in regard to the *evidence* on which their stories rest. In perusing the accounts of Ráma and Krishna, we perceive little or nothing but direct and palpable contradictions, and inconsistencies, overwhelming abominations, and the grossest exaggeration. Instead of being led to acknowledge that these accounts are sanctioned, and exhibited, by heaven, we plainly perceive that there is nothing of that air of credibility about them, which can entitle them to the smallest respect as human historical compositions. They are filled with the extravagant fancies of the Hindu poets, who either attempt to praise the deeds of some deceased kings, or who, from the stores of their own imagination, and the aid of the poetical art, and the direction of the popular superstition, merely seek the amusement of the readers, and their own renown.

They contain, in short, few moral lessons of the slightest utility, but, on the contrary, much which is calculated to disgust every mind which has the slightest regard to moral purity; and they are, in every respect, unworthy of being ranked as divine revelations. The history of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is, in all these points, directly opposed to them. Its statements are distinguished by the greatest simplicity. From beginning to end they are consistent with one another. They are important; they are holy in their tendency; they are distinguished by the greatest wisdom; they present us with an account of a perfect character, so minute and so extensive, and so varied in its relations, that it never could have been delineated had it not been real. They form part of a book so glorious, that it must have come from God. The most highly endowed man on earth could not, by his own unassisted reason, have described God as it has described him; could not have illustrated the divine works as it has illustrated them; could not have revealed the state of man as it has revealed it; could not have pointed out such a way of salvation, as it has pointed out; could not have unfolded holiness, as it has unfolded it; and could not have revealed such a state of bliss as it has revealed. I invite the attention of all the Hindus to this subject, convinced that, after inquiry, it will be found to be such as I have represented it. I also call upon them to examine the history

of the Bible. They will find that it has always gained great credence in the world, since the time it was composed; that it never could have gained this credence had it not been true; and that its witnesses had a sufficient knowledge of facts, and gave their testimony in opposition to all their worldly advantages, and amidst persecution, and in circumstances, which do not leave the shadow of a doubt in any candid mind as to their veracity. All the Christian Missionaries in the Bombay Presidency will be happy to state this subject to the fullest extent. My space will not permit me to say more upon it at present. A separate work respecting it will speedily be published in Marát,hí.

II. Having made these observations, on the character of the Hindu gods, and their Avatáras, I now proceed, in the *second* place, to consider Mora Bhatta's observations on IDOLATRY. This is a most important subject; for it is necessary, not only that the true God should be alone acknowledged; but that he should be worshipped in a right and acceptable manner,—in a way calculated to display his glory, and to impress the mind with his true character,—with his wisdom, spirituality, majesty, power, holiness, goodness, and other attributes.

1. The Bhatta remarks that, "There is not a single Hindu who reckons an image to be God". Greatly would I rejoice, indeed, could I believe

this statement to be correct; but facts of the most stubborn kind, and of every day's occurrence, force me to say that the matter is far otherwise. There are some Hindus who believe that the idols are not gods; but there are millions of them who believe the images to be God. They are to be found in every village, and in every town, in every Kasba, and in every Suba, of every caste, and of every station, of every sex, and of every age. They call the images gods; and they treat them as such. They are instructed by the Bráhmans to act in this manner; and they have no feeling of shame in connexion with their conduct. In some places, and on some occasions, they fan the images that they may enjoy cool air; they cloth them that they may not suffer by the cold; they place them beneath curtains that they may not be annoyed by the musquitoes and flies; they besmear them with red lead, &c. that they may be pleased with their own beauty; they put them to sleep that they may obtain rest; they go to ask them for the interpretations of dreams, and omens; they say that some images of the same god are more powerful in giving children and other gifts than others; they are afraid of their being touched by Musalmans and Europeans lest the Godship should be defiled or destroyed; they purify them after they have been touched; they sometimes believe that the idols are unwell; and they hear the Bráhmans say that the stone and metallic figures are useless without the Mantras.

I quote Mora Bhatta Dāndekara himself on this subject. When reasoning in support of idolatry, he informs us that there is something more than mere stones in the idols. "By means of the Mantras"; he observes "the Deity is according to the rules laid down, in the sacred books, called into the image, and thus the immaterial god obtains an imperceptible imagined body. When he is thus endowed with a body, he is, according to the rules laid down in the sacred books treated as having a body". "To those whose attention is fixed night and day on the image the invisible form of God makes its appearance". It is evident, then, that the Hindus in great numbers, are so foolish as to believe the idols to be God. The Hindu Shāstras, I would here remark, are very inconsistent on this subject. In the Tantra Sāra it is said that, "He will inevitably be punished in hell who considers the image of the Deity as a simple stone". In another place it is said,

संनिहितं हि देवमिदं तस्मात्पूजयेत्तु यः

किं हि जितयसः सुताः परावर्तमानवन्ति ते

"All those ignorant persons who regard as God, an image of earth, metal, stone, or wood, subject themselves to bodily misery, and can never obtain final deliverance". In one place it is said "that the image when endowed with divinity, is deprived of its material qualities"; and in another it "possesses no divinity at all". It is not my part to reconcile these variances. I would remark, however, that the worship of images ap-

appears to be comparatively a modern practice among the Hindus. When mankind first forsook the pure worship of the spiritual God, they worshipped probably the sun, and the stars, and the different elements as fire, water, air, &c. This corrupted worship is predominant in the Vedas. The worship of images, which is, if possible, a more corrupted worship, is predominant in the Purānas.*

2. In support of idolatry, Mora Bhatta observes that "God is no where to be seen. When sin is committed it does not appear that, in this world, he punishes the sinner on account of it", and that, for this reason, idolatry has been established. In order to elicit the absurdity of this argument, I have only to ask, Does God become visible by a stone? and in the form of a stone does he restrain transgressors and punish them? No person in his senses will say that he does. I also maintain that God, by his works, does make manifestations of himself in this world. He reveals his power, his truth, his faithfulness, and his wisdom. To some extent he actually punishes sin. He makes the practice of it the occasion of destroying peace in the mind, and filling it with fear and shame; and, on its account, he sends trouble, disease, and death into the world. He also gives his word to men; and this word, even according to Mora Bhatta, must be viewed as very powerful. "When a king has sent par-

* See Appendix I.

ticular orders to his subjects", he writes, "obedience to them secures their welfare, disobedience procures the reverse. In like manner, on hearing these orders, their minds are agitated by joy, or grief, or fear, as the circumstances may determine. Now consider who excites these feelings. Should it be said that the king does so, it may be replied that he is not present. The king's commandment is not the king himself. There must be, therefore, some strange power in the commandment itself". On these grounds the person who practises idolatry must be held guilty of great sin. He overlooks the intimations which God gives of himself by his works. He overlooks the lessons which are taught by the afflictions sent on account of sin. He overlooks the declarations contained in the divine word. He resorts to an expedient of no use; and he falsely says that God by this expedient prevents sin. Alas that such evil devices should enter the hearts of men!

3. The Bhatta calls upon his readers to "look at the conduct and behaviour of those in whose religion no such observances as idolatry are laid down, and they will at once see whether image-worship and the like are of any use". Let this inquiry be made to the fullest extent; and let it refer to the conduct which is practised within the temples, and which is practised without their walls. The Christians who do not worship images are accustomed to meet together for the

public worship of God. When they assemble they celebrate the praises of God, in which they extol the divine character, and the divine works, and thank God for his manifold mercies. They confess the sins which they have committed, pray for the pardon of their iniquities, for the sanctification of their souls, for knowledge, peace of mind, and spiritual joy,—for a blessing on themselves, their friends and all mankind,—and for eternal and unspeakable happiness in that place where God especially displays his glory. They listen to the word of God, in which the divine character, the natural state of the human race, the means of salvation, and the duty of man, are unfolded. By these means they receive, through the blessing of God, and the operation of the Holy Spirit, an increase of their knowledge, of their faith, and of their love to God, and an addition of strength to their hopes, and determination to forsake sin. Contrast with this procedure and experience, the conduct of idolaters in similar circumstances. In the first instance, in order to get rid of their sins, as they say, they declare their intention of entering on the performance of religious rites. Immediately they pay their adorations to a shell, or a bell, and then enter upon the more particular worship of the idols, which they may perform with sixteen different rites. After they have anointed the stones with milk, curdles, ghee, sugar, or honey, which they call the *Panchāmritanāna*, they present clothes, sandal wood, and gar-

lands to the gods. They burn incense, and kindle lamps. They present eatable offerings, coconuts, betel, and money. They walk round the image. They perform the *Pushpánjali*, or scattering of flowers. Sometimes they worship by placing their fingers in their mouths, and roaring like sheep. Sometimes they bawl out "*Elkot! elkot!*"! sometimes "*Udeva! udeva!*"! sometimes "*Jnánrāja!*"! sometimes "*Māuli Tukaráma jnáneshvara máuli!*"! sometimes "*Harihara!*"! sometimes "*Rāma Sītā!*"! &c. They beat drums, and play on various rude instruments. They walk in procession, and wave clubs, and twigs of the *Tulasi*. In this way they dishonour God, fill themselves with pride, deceive their own minds, and injure their souls.*—The conduct of true Christians, when out of the temple, is distinguished by the utmost propriety. They fear God, worship him in spirit and truth in their families, and observe justice and uprightness in their dealings with mankind. It must be admitted that there is more knowledge, learning, and civilization amongst them than among idolaters.

4. The Bhatta observes, "That God is like the image no one imagines; but, merely forming such a conception, he spends a short time every day in its worship, and thus acquires peace of mind. This process having been continued, the true knowledge of God is at length obtained; and the mind is separated from the world. Then, it is

* See Appendix K.

that observances are seen to be of no use, and are quitted of course". In the first part of this declaration, there is a confession of what, in the eye of reason, must appear to be extremely sinful. The Hindus are aware that God is not, and cannot be, like an image, and yet they delude themselves so as to believe that he is like an image! They do this under the pretence of pleasing him, of shewing forth his greatness, dignity, and excellency! They tell us that they find peace in this work of misrepresenting God; but they do not unfold the nature of the peace, and shew how it is obtained. I suspect that it is the peace of delusion: it is certainly not of a right kind. It is absolutely impossible that the true knowledge of God should be obtained from looking at that which "no one considers like God". The mind may be so far separated from worldliness by this employment, I have no doubt, that it may ultimately arrive at such a state of infatuation, as will direct its possessor to neglect to support himself by the work of his hands, to wander about as a beggar, and a burden to society, or to betake himself to a forest, and destroy himself. "Persons on whom such effects are produced" are certainly "to be found at the present day; but I trust that the dissemination of knowledge among the Hindus will diminish their number. "Where qualifications like theirs", writes the Bhatta, "have not been attained, of what avail is it for any one merely with the mouth to

teach lessons of wisdom, and yet live as his inclinations prompt? If in image-worship, and those observances which relate to the body, and other things, there is no virtue, pray what virtue is there in mere speaking"? He must remember, however, that he himself has said that "there is a great power in words"; and that while Christians expect nothing from improper teachers, they possess many instructors who are exemplary in their lives.

5. The Bhatta maintains that "the attention of the mind has been directed to pure objects with the view of separating it from those which are impure. It is for this purpose that the four-armed image of God, and other images of a like description, are used; and it is by means of them that evil thoughts are expelled from the mind. In like manner, the mind must be ever active: the ceremonies of image-worship are, therefore, prescribed to afford it occupation". This statement affords no support to idolatry. The mind assuredly can attach itself to invisible objects, that is to say, it can reflect on the descriptions which it receives of them, and on the actions said to be performed by them. Shall it be said, then, that only the Supreme God cannot be viewed by the eye of the mind; and that, in his place, the *Chaturbhujākāra*, or image with four hands, must be erected? Though God has neither form nor shape, the mind can contemplate his attributes as they are revealed, his word, his commands,

his purposes, his threatenings, his promises, his people, his providence, and his government. The most striking evil of idolatry, as far as man is concerned, is, that the mind finds repose in something which falls short of these important objects, which demand perpetual consideration, and which can only be overlooked in the practise of great sin. Of what use is the *Chaturbhujákára*? What wisdom is to be found in it? Why are such trifles as a club, a shell, a chakra, and a water lily, put into the hands of Vishnu? Who but a fool can look at them? Since their possessor is known to be wicked will it not occur, that he may use some of them for the purpose of destroying his worshippers? Why are four, and not four thousand, hands ascribed to him? And why has he not four thousand weapons? Such questions as these, when properly considered, must point out the absurdity of the Bhatta's reasoning. To strengthen their effect, I quote a Shloka from the fourth Skanda of the Bhágavata:—

विषयान्धायतश्चित्तंविषयेषुप्रसज्यते
मामनुस्मरतश्चित्तंमामेवप्रविलोपये १

“The mind when contemplating a material object, becomes materialized; but when contemplating me, it becomes godlike”. This confession is attributed to Krishna. According to its meaning, the application of the mind to a stone must be attended with its stupefaction.

The occupation which the mind receives in

idolatry is an evil occupation, as I have formerly shewed; and the mind had better be idle than doing mischief. It had better be frisking like a monkey, than employed in serving a stone instead of its Maker. The Bhatta ought to remember this fact; and he ought also to bear in mind that what is unconstant is not even allowed, according to some passages of the Hindu Shástras, to perform idolatry. The following Shlokas are most express on this subject:—

सदाग्रचिःसदानघोहनृद्यनियतीचयः

यस्यसुस्मरणयुक्तोवेदशास्त्रविचक्षणः ॥ १ ॥

ग्रीवादिगुणसंपन्नोयस्यैवास्ति सुबुद्धिमान्

तेन निश्चिन्ताः कर्तव्यः केनाद्यन्येनैव च ॥ २ ॥

“He only who has his senses under his controul, who is humble, always pure, devout, possessed of a strong memory and good abilities, who conducts himself with propriety, and who has a sound understanding, a good temper, prudence, and similar good qualities,—he only has a right to perform religious ceremonies; this is an unalterable rule”. In the view of this statement, will the Bráhmans tell the ignorant to tie stones round their necks, and to drown themselves in the ocean of sin?

6. Mora Bhatta Dándekara endeavours to prove that “merit is produced by idolatry”. He says that the Hindu Shástras support his statements on this subject. It is because this is the case, that we say that these Shástras did not come from God. I have formerly shewn that the

testimony of Brahmá cannot be trusted; and nothing more requires to be mentioned on this point. I proceed to the argument drawn from reason. It is said that "merit arises from pleasing God. Idol worship and the like are the means of pleasing God". My ideas of merit, and those of Mora Bhatta, probably differ. I would define merit to be that for which God is required to give a reward; and, taking the word in this sense, I would say that, on account of the sin which mixes with all which man can do, and the dependence of man on the divine mercy and bounty, no merit can be procured by his actions intrinsically considered. It must be understood that Mora Bhatta, instead of giving us a proof that idolatry is pleasing to God, has given only a parable which does not in the slightest degree apply to the subject, or rather, which, as far as can be understood, must militate against his side of the question. "A person of your acquaintance", he observes "is in a distant country, or in your own. You take another individual, and giving him the name of your friend, or without any name being given, simply intending him in your mind, you make a present of food, clothes, and the like. This will undoubtedly please the original person intended". At this illustration, I have seen a native laugh most heartily, and with the greatest propriety. The state of the case is this: - God demands the services of men; but men, giving the name of God to other objects, render *them* the

services. Now, I ask every man of reason, whether God will be pleased, or displeased at such conduct? He will most certainly be displeased. His wrath will be excited because that which belongs to him is given to another. He will undoubtedly be displeased, also, because his name is given to another object, for nothing but God himself is worthy to be called God, and because when any thing but God himself is called God, the infinite distance between the Creator, and the creature does not appear, and the honour which belongs peculiarly to God, is not rendered to him. An earthly king would not for a moment tolerate such a procedure with regard to any of his subjects; and will the Supreme Being sanction it on the part of his people? Any man who ought to receive money or clothes, from another individual, would be highly enraged at that individual for not giving them to himself. God has undoubtedly a right to all the services of men; and he must be offended when they are rendered to others. The following extract from a Bengali publication may illustrate this point in connexion with idolatry. "Suppose your servant, instead of attending at your house to do the work proper to his situation, goes to the river side, makes an image of clay, calls the image he has thus made his master, and waits diligently upon it, by placing rice before it, screening it from the sun, pouring water upon it, &c. Suppose he comes to you in the evening, and when you

charge him with having neglected your service, he denies it, and explains himself by telling you what he has been doing:—will you, I ask, admit of this explanation, and allow the reality of his professed service and pay him his wages? No; instead of doing this, you will look upon him as disordered in his intellect, and send him about his business. Applying, therefore, this illustration to the advocates of idolatry, allow me to tell them, that, however, they may think to get to heaven by it, they will find themselves at last, like the servant who came for his wages, wofully disappointed; for instead of heaven, hell will undoubtedly be their portion *

The illustration which Mora Bhatta has adduced in reference to “reproach” can in no sense apply to worship. I cannot understand for what purpose he has adduced it.

7. The Bhatta seems to labour under great difficulties respecting the consecration of images. “When a king has sent particular orders to his subjects”, he observes, “obedience to them secures their welfare, disobedience procures the reverse: In like manner on hearing their orders, their minds are agitated by joy, or grief, or fear, as the circumstances may determine. Now consider who excites these feelings. Should it be

* Mundy's Christianity and Hinduism compared. This is an excellent work so far as the statement of the Evidence of Christianity is concerned. The comparisons however, are too brief and general.

said that the king does so, it may be replied that he is not present. The king's commandment is not the king himself. There must, therefore, be some strange power in the commandment". "If then it is admitted that there is power in human words, it cannot be doubted, that there is power in those which are divine, and altogether true, and faithful. In these circumstances, by means of the Mantras, the Deity is according to the rules laid down in the sacred books, called into the image, and thus the immaterial God obtains an imperceptible imagined body. When he is thus endowed with a body, he is, according to the rules laid down in the sacred books, treated as one having a body, and from the experience of this treatment, he derives pleasure". I do say as was anticipated that there is "nothing tangible" in this statement, unless it be understood that the Bhatta has given it for the express purpose of injuring himself, and his cause. There is a great power in a king's commandment, I allow; but it must not be forgotten that the Mantra is not a commandment from the king to the subject; but a commandment from the subjects to the king, and even to the greatest of all kings! How will it then prevail? The Bhatta knows the Shloka:—

देवाधीनं जगत्सर्वमन्त्राधीनं च देवतं ॥

तन्मन्त्रोन्मत्तानाधीनं ब्रह्माणोममदैवतं ॥

"All the universe is under the power of the gods; the gods are subject to the power of the Mantras;

the Mantras are under the power of the Bráhmans; the Bráhmans are therefore our gods". He perhaps, on this account, may say that he, and his associates are the king, and not God. I do not think, however, that he will venture on this claim, though, I have found many ready to urge it. He will probably say that the Mantra is the composition of God, and therefore will succeed. I demand the proof of this point; and maintain that it cannot be ascertained that any Mantra has succeeded for the consecration of any image. The Hindus themselves, in immense multitudes, begin to doubt about the power of the Mantras; and especially of those which are said to have the power of bringing God by distinction into a stone. Let us hear the reasoning of one of their number on this subject: "Both you and we see clearly, that the properties of stone, earth, and wood, which the image had before the *Pránapratishtha*, it retains also afterwards; that, as the flies and mosquitoes were before playing on it from head to foot, so they do also afterwards; that, as previously to the performance of the *Pránapratishtha*, the image would break to pieces, if it fell on the ground, so it would also afterwards; and that, as before it had not the power of eating, sleeping, and moving, so it is also destitute of this power afterwards. How then can it be proved that the image is animated by God"? "We see that the worshippers of images are continually afraid, lest their hands or feet should

perhaps be broken. If they were perfectly sure, that the images are animated by the gods, which they respectively represent, they would not, till the present day, be so anxious about their preservation. With respect to what you said about the power of renowned images to punish those who injure them, we should readily believe this, if they punished the rats, cockroaches, and other creatures who spoil their colour, or make holes into their body; or if they drove off and punished the flies when they want to place themselves upon them, after they have been sitting upon unclean things. But however this may be, what power images possess, or do not possess, may easily be put to the test: give them only into our hands; and you will soon see which of us can punish the other".* The whole matter is indescribably absurd. Powerful as the Mantra is said to be by

* Braja Mohana. The argument here pursued by a heathen is very similar in point to that adopted by Minutius Felix a Christian Lawyer, who lived about the end of the second, or beginning of the third century. In the dialogue between Octavius (a Christian) and Cæcilius (a Gentile) the following passage occurs: "The mice, the swallows, bats, &c. gnaw, insult, and sit upon your gods, and, unless you drive them away, build nests in their mouths; the spiders weave their webs over their faces; you first make them, then clean, wipe and protect, them, that you may fear and worship them; but you should know that they are gods before you worship them". An edition of the work of Minutius Felix was published at Heidelberg in 1560 by Balduinus. It has since been repeatedly reprinted. It contains several passages of great force, which may be adduced in opposition to the Hindu superstition. See *Hoornbeek de Conversione Indorum et Gentilium*, p. 81., &c.

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the Bráhmans, its whole effect is lost by the touch, or even by the shadow of a Musalmán or European! Nothing can appear more strange than that any person should believe that it has any power. The day, I trust, is at hand, when this the principal argument for Hindu idolatry will be seen to be lighter than vanity. Let those who have any pretension to wisdom proceed to determine the question.

8. The Bhatta observes that "to those whose attention is perpetually fixed on the image, the form (or shape) of God appears". He says that there "are such individuals to be found at the present day"; and that it is because they do not testify as to the truth of the fact that heretical notions have got afloat. I ask, since this is said to be the case, why for the general interest they do not come forward, and subject themselves to an examination. We should be at no loss to expose the falsity of their pretensions; and this object would be accomplished by our simply asking them, How can they see the form of God, who is really formless. Shankarácharya himself could give them no assistance in this case. His efforts, indeed, will not be available to defend the Hindu religion. They afford not the smallest proof that the Hindu Shâstras came from God. His arguments are wholly inapplicable to our objections against idolatry. Let not the Bráhmans repose any confidence in him.*

* Appendix L.

9. **Mora Bhatta** gives a pretty accurate statement of an argument which we are accustomed to use against idolatry. "It may be said", he observes, "that the image-worship and stated observances which at present prevail among the Hindus, and that the images of the gods which they worship, are calculated in every way to increase more and more the ignorance complained of, and the evil passions which arise from it. Wisdom, and the virtue which springs from it, can never be obtained by means of them; because with whatsoever object the mind may be conversant, it acquires, from its attaching itself to it the nature of that object. If, therefore, the knowledge of God is to be obtained, its attention must be directed to God. By directing it to several gods, the knowledge of the one God can never be acquired. The same is to be understood of stated observances". In reply to this reasoning, the Bhatta remarks that "there are many answers in the Hindu Shástras, as for example, that observances are to be put an end to by observances; that the work of the hand is to be done away by handy work; that the imaginations of the heart are to be borne down by the heart's imaginations; that poison is to be neutralized by poison". How these observations can apply to the objection, far less refute it, I cannot see. The Bhatta has already allowed, as we have seen, that images are not like God; and it is consequently apparent that the Hindus, who "imagine them

to be like God", can only be confirmed in error by the act. I have already alluded to this subject, and I need say nothing more upon it. None of the reputed forms of the Hindus gods, which are said to be represented by the images, are such as God ever would assume, for as has been already proved in regard to Brahmá, Vishnu, Shiva, Ráma, Krishna, and as may be proved in regard to all of them, they are sinful in the highest degree, and entitled neither to respect, nor love. The contemplation of the images of these "gods", therefore, though undoubtedly it may teach the persons who practises it, to remember the accounts of them, can be attended with no good, and can only fill the mind with impure thoughts, according to the principle which the Bhatta approves of:—From impure objects, there can arise only impurity. It must ever remain true that "by directing the attention to them, the knowledge of the one God can never be obtained". The very images themselves are more calculated to excite laughter than devotion, and to disgust the mind, than to invite it to that which is excellent. They are mere caricatures. From Ganpatí, with his elephant's head and enormous belly; from Vishnu, Shiva and others, with their clubs, and skulls and other articles; from Devi with her cat's eyes, and tiger's teeth; from Brahmá with his geese-drawn chariot; from the impure linga, and from deified cows and monkeys, &c. what love to God, what reverence of his law,

what holiness and knowledge can be derived? The investigation of this subject must produce the conviction that idolatry is absurd.

Mora Bhatta endeavours to establish his point by referring to the conduct and practises of the Musalmáns. His attempt, however, is altogether useless. The Christian ministers, and people, condemn their practice in the strongest manner, when in addition to the acknowledgement of the only living and true God, "they put their trust", as is said in the *Hindu-dharma-st, hápaná* "in those men who have been distinguished by their wonderful achievements", because they thus virtually and plainly declare that God is not sufficient for them, and thus highly dishonour him, and view men as existing in a situation in which it is manifest that God never intended they should be viewed. The similarity of their practises to those of the Hindus can never prove these practises to be correct. Both are erroneous.

The illustrations, which the Bhatta takes from the Christian religion, are likewise unsuitable to his purpose. In fact, they suggest arguments in opposition to his views. I have already proved that there is not the slightest analogy between the character, and works, and mode of subsistence of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, of whom the godhead is composed, and Brahmá, Vishnu, and Shiva, and Ráma, Krishna and other imaginary gods of the Hindus; and I shall now, in a few words, shew that there is no such analogy

between idolatry, and the Christian sacraments as can, in the slightest degree, vindicate the practice of the former. There is no resemblance in the essential features of the case. The first point which ought to be considered is the manner in which the idols, and the water, bread, and wine which are used in the Christian sacraments, are respectively viewed; and, regarding it, we have only to remember that the images are required to be worshipped, while the elements are considered merely as emblems of Christ's body which was broken, and his blood which was shed for sinners, and the Holy Spirit whose influence is diffused over the soul. An object of worship and a sign are two very different things.—The Hindus say that merit is procured by idolatry; but Christians say, that all the merit which they possess is bestowed by the Lord Jesus Christ. From the sight of the images of Râma, Krishna &c. those Hindus, who are instructed in their stories may undoubtedly remember them; but from this exercise no profit can be derived, because the stories of Râma, and Krishna, are sinful, and because they shew that these imaginary persons have no connexion with God. The contemplation and worship of thieves, liars, adulterers, and murderers, must be attended with great detriment. As Christ, however, is God, as he is possessed of every possible perfection, and as his history clearly manifests the divine glory, and the scheme of redemption,—his contemplation and worship

must be in the highest degree proper; and as through the sacraments, in which the bread, and water, and wine, are used as emblematical of his work, and sufferings, and the influences of his Holy Spirit, his remembrance is cherished, they must be in the highest degree beneficial. The facts, that God has given his son for sinners, and thus displayed his love; and that Christ, in the room of sinners, has suffered the punishment of iniquity, and thus displayed the holiness of God (which could not permit the communication of pardon without an atonement,) and manifested the value of the human soul and the evil of sin, are exhibited in these ordinances. In the one called baptism, moreover, in which water is applied to the body, professing believers are publicly admitted into the Church. In the other called the Lord's Supper, in which a little wine and bread are used symbolically, the disciples shew to one another their mutual affection and friendship. Several other benefits are derived from them.

A Hindu, who practises idolatry is guilty of the greatest folly and sin when, overlooking the glorious works of nature, "he enters into a room, shuts the door, takes a piece of stone daubed over with paint, or a piece of metal or the like, and sits down and calls it God". "Forasmuch as he is the offspring of God, he ought not to think that the God-head is like unto gold, or silver, or stone graven by art or man's device". He gets no in-

struction from the stone, no revelation of the divine character, or works, or grace; but on the contrary, he subjects himself to the influence of a vain delusion. The Christian admires the works of God; and when he surveys them in all their magnitude, extent, and number, and when he contemplates the regularity of their movements, and the glory of their arrangements, he directs his thoughts to him who is the Creator, and the Preserver, and ascribes unto him the highest praise for the wisdom, truth, faithfulness, and goodness which are displayed. When he celebrates the dying love of Jesus, by eating bread and drinking wine in his name, he does nothing which is inconsistent with the discoveries of nature, and the divine attributes which they illustrate. He merely performs a service, through the appointed symbols, in which God is exhibited as holy as well as great, and as abundant in loving kindness and tender mercy. In the sacramental rite, then, there is no adoration of an inanimate object; no giving of the name of God to that which is not God; no vain imagination about a sinful form, or pretended likeness of God; no reference to enchantments by which God is brought to reside in a stone; no fear of God fleeing from his abode by the touch of men; and none of the absurdities with which idolatry is chargeable.

The Bhatta, it is apparent from the considerations which have been brought forward, has

failed to establish the propriety and lawfulness of idolatry; and nothing is left for me but to denounce it as in the highest degree sinful, and to beseech the Hindus, for the reasons which have been stated, to forsake it. In order to shew the excellence, and reasonableness, and authority of the Christian Scriptures, I extract from them a few passages on the subject. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might". "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve". "I am the Lord; that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another". "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth". "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing, which is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow thyself to them nor serve them". "Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen...for the customs of the people are vain; for one cutteth a tree out of the forest (the work of the hands of the workman with the axe). They deck it with silver and with gold, they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne because they cannot go: be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good". "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not. They have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not. They have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat". "They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses: they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed. Who hath formed a God, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed; and the workmen, they are of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; yet they shall fear, and they shall be ashamed together. The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth; he drinketh no water, and is faint. The carpenter stretcheth out his rule, he marketh it out with a line, he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house. He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth (or chooseth) for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread;

yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth it: he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down there-to. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, *Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire: and the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god...* And none considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, *I have burnt part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof: I have roasted flesh, and eaten it; and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand?* These passages must commend themselves to reason and conscience. I leave them, without any further comment, to produce their natural effect.

III. The *third* subject, brought before our notice by the Bhatta, to which I advert, refers to the **RULE OF FAITH**, or **SHA'STRA** given by God. "We do not seek", he says, "to overturn the doctrines held by any one; for, as God has consulted the convenience of all people on the face of the earth with respect to food and clothing, so, for the inhabitants of different places, has he laid down

different doctrines with a view to their salvation. Those doctrines, therefore, and those alone, according to which they severally worship God, are to them true. According to the nature of these several doctrines do they severally obtain reward from God". These are most extraordinary assertions; and they are completely in opposition to the Hindu religion, which is known by every person to be an exclusive system. They are not however, peculiar to the Bhatta. They are urged by many of the natives in Bombay,—by Hindus, Musalmáns, and Parsís. I can give no other account of their origin, than the supposition of the consciousness of the superiority of Christianity; and a prevalent fear that this system may be embraced. "Christianity is the best of all religions, but it is not intended for us, is the declaration of not a few of the natives". In order to oppose the latter part of this statement; and the opinion of the Bhatta, that God has given different religions for the different countries of the world, it may be well to enter briefly into particulars.

Religion viewed in regard to God, who proposes it, may be considered as the revelation of his character, and purposes, and works; and the declaration of the duty and destiny of man. It is evident, therefore, that, in whatever form it may be proposed, it must be consistent with its author, and with his demands on his intelligent creatures. It is absolutely impossible to imagine

that the case should be otherwise. God must in every true revelation give a consistent account of his perfections and operations, of his will and of his kingdom. His requirements from mankind must correspond with the general nature which he has given to them; and his law must in every case be holy, just, and good. All men come into the world, and leave it on terms of equality. Diversified as their external circumstances may be, it is evident that the constitution of their minds is essentially the same; that they are all, in a greater or less degree, the subjects of the same passions, affections, and emotions; and that, in the use of their intellectual faculties, they are viewed as under the same responsibility. The residences of men change; but God is unchangeable,—the same yesterday to-day and for ever. Men may form themselves into different communities; but they cannot alienate themselves from the government of God, or remove a single demand which he makes upon them. On the ground of these principles, I maintain, that the religion given and approved by God must, in every situation, be substantially the same.

When the question is viewed in its particular aspects, we are forced to come to the same conclusion. It is a fact that the different religions prevalent in the earth are in general directly opposed to one another in their essential principles. Some of them exalt God; others, evident-

ly and directly dishonour him. Some of them are Mono-theistic; others are Poly-theistic. They give opposite accounts of the character, and attributes of God. Some of them declare that he was at first destitute of qualities; others, that he is unchangeable in his nature, and, that from the beginning he possesses every excellence. Some of them teach that he never can sin; others that he has sinned, but cannot be charged with iniquity. Some of them declare that he is acceptably worshipped by images; others that idolatry is the abominable thing which he hates. They give contradictory statements of the creation, and duration, of the world; and the various changes which have taken place upon it. Their accounts of men are of a conflicting kind. Some of them declare that the soul of man is a part of God; others that it is quite distinct from the divinity. Some of them teach that mankind are pure at birth; others that they are sinful from the commencement of their existence. Some of them recognize the system of caste; others ascribe the same origin to men, and declare that God requires all men to love one another as brethren. Some of them declare that men can work out a righteousness of their own; others, that they must be indebted for salvation entirely to divine grace. In some instances, they teach that the soul of man has its state unalterably fixed after death; in others, they inform us that it will pass through a multitude of births.

Each of them individually declares that the other is false. Since the facts are of this nature, it cannot for one moment be imagined that the different religions are respectively true to those who practise them. Those opinions which are directly contradictory to one another, it must be admitted, cannot proceed from the God of truth. The declaration that they are alike veritable involves the charge of falsehood, and inconsistency, against the divine being.

These remarks apply with the greatest force to the Christian and Hindu religions, which in some important particulars we have already contrasted, and which, from the charges which we have brought, and which we will further bring, against the latter, must be perceived to be as opposed to one another as light to darkness. Both cannot be true in any circumstances; and the Bhatta, who makes an allegation to the contrary, instead of attempting to prove his opinion, has only given an illustration, taken from food and clothes. He must bear in mind, however, that an illustration is not an argument; and that the one which, in this case, he has given is entirely unsuitable. Religion is infinitely more important than food and clothes; but, not to press this point, it may be observed that a man may change his dress without any inconvenience, and any sin. The nations of the earth actually do this without any great hesitation. The Bráhmans in India have adopted the Musalmán

turban, and other parts of foreign dress; and they may again soon have recourse to other alterations. If, in this manner, they should approve of the true religion, and enter into it, it will be profitable for them.

I formerly remarked that "God is the Father of all mankind; and no Father gives opposite laws for the government of his children. God has given one Law; and therefore, there is but one true religion, and one true written rule of religion; in the same manner as there is but one Sun for this earth". The Bhatta endeavours without effect to throw ridicule over this statement. His remarks are superseded in the tract from which his quotation is taken. While it is there admitted that a father may prescribe different employments for his children, it is declared, that he will not, if he have the character of consistency and goodness, give opposite laws for their moral conduct; and, that though God may prescribe different occupations to men, he will not say to one "Steal", and to another "Do not steal". He will not give different accounts of his own character, and history, to them. He will demand of every one of them proper love and respect. No father would describe his nature in opposite ways to his children; and God who is infinitely greater than man, will not act more inconsistently than a common father; nor support contrary religions.—The allusion to the sun was intended merely as an illustration;

and it is perfectly applicable for this purpose. "As there is but one sun for this world, so there is only one true Shástra". The Bhatta says that the innumerable and remote fixed stars are suns. I rejoice to find him express his belief in this fact; but, in passing, I would remark that he did not certainly learn it from the Hindu Shástras. We find in the Manu Sanhita the following statement:—"In the egg (produced from the seed) the great power sat inactive a whole year of the Creator, at the close of which by his thought alone, he caused the egg to divide itself; and from its two divisions he framed the heaven above, and the earth beneath: in the midst he placed the subtle ether, the eight regions, and the permanent receptacle of waters". The Bhatta has written contrary to this statement, but he deserves credit for his admission; and, while I grant that there are many suns in the universe, I maintain that as they have, as far as we see, the same nature as luminaries, there ought, if the fact is to be applied to the illustration of the question about Shástras, to be the same nature in all Shástras. Since we do not find this to be the case, it must be evident that the Bhatta's logic has failed him. There can, as we have shewn, be only one true religion.

IV. The *fourth* subject brought before our notice by the Bhatta, to which I advert, is the consequence of an abandonment of the Hindu re-

ligion. "The people here who embrace the religion of Foreigners", he observes "only depart farther from God". "Several years ago the Portuguese converted to their own Christian religion the inhabitants of the Goa, and Basseen districts", &c.

None of the Christian ministers, against whose books the Bhatta contends, approve either of the means, by which the Portuguese procured their converts, nor of the conduct of these proselytes. The Portuguese, in many instances, used violence,* which can only produce hypocrites. They gave to the Hindus the name of Christians, before they gave them Christian instruction, or before they witnessed in them an obedience to Christian precepts. They have kept them in ignorance of the Christian Shāstras. They have allowed them to retain many of their evil heathenish customs. They have not expelled multitudes of them from their communion, when their immoral conduct became known to them. They have directed them almost in every particular contrary to the scriptures; and they have shewn that they were connected with that system, which in the bible is declared to be Anti-Christian. The Goa-kars, then, though in the

*The Natives, to the present day, allege various instances in which converts were procured in this manner. They maintain that at Tanna, and other villages in Salsette, pieces of cow's flesh were thrust into the mouths of the Hindus by the Portuguese! The persons who lost the Hindu religion in this manner were, in most instances, refused re-admission.

admission of the existence of one God, and one Saviour, they are better than the Hindus, are still far from being right in regard to many particulars of faith and practice. As we do not, however, call upon the Hindus, when they abandon the religion of their fathers, to become like the Goswars or Portuguese, it is not necessary to enlarge on this subject. I shall merely endeavour to remove one or two prejudices, which the Brahma endeavours to throw in the way of inquirers.

With regard to the use of *animal food*, I would remark that the Hindus appear to me to act most inconsistently on this subject. They believe that vegetables are endowed with life, and that, as said by Mine, "they have internal conscience, and are sensible of pleasure and pain": they nevertheless use them as food with the greatest freedom. In the *Munda Shastras*, an oil press is condemned on account of the vegetable seed which is destroyed by it. All the classes, however, use oil to a great extent, and thus encourage what they believe to be sinful. Many of the castes eat animal food; and yet it is seldom said that, on this account, any evil will befall them. The *Shenavi*, and some other classes of Brahmans, eat fishes under the name of "*sda-vegetables*". The most learned Pandits allow that in the *Satya Yuga*, the sacrifice of even cows was allowed; and that their flesh was eaten after it was offered to the gods. The authority of the *Veda* may be adduced on this point; and several *Puranas* may be referred to as

proving that at a sacrifice offered by Vishvámitra, the Bráhmans devoured 10,000 cows which had been offered in sacrifice, and sought not again to revive them*. The Bráhmans were accustomed to use eleven kinds of flesh at a *Pitarpaksha*. Seven Bráhmans according to the Matsya Purána, when they got hungry in a field, seized upon a cow belonging to Garga Rishi, devoted it to the manes of their ancestors, and forthwith consumed it†. The skins of animals are without any scruples used for shoes. Thousands of animalculæ are destroyed in the water, and other liquids, used by the Bráhmans. Insects are crushed to death by them beyond number as they pass along the roads and fields. If it be said, then, that God has the power, at any period of the world's history, of ordering animals to be slaughtered for the purpose of sacrifice, it may certainly be said that he has the power of permitting them to be slain for the purpose of food. If many of them are every moment permitted by God to be actually put to death, without any intention on the part of man, the divine being most certainly can sanction their destruction for useful purposes.

Christians condemn the giving of unnecessary pain to animals. They perceive, however, that

* Some of the lower orders of the Hindus believe that the animals killed in sacrifices were made alive again. The supposition that this was the case, increases the evil according to the Hindu religion. The animals after suffering the pains of death are brought back to the same birth!

† See Appendix M.

the souls of men and of animals are entirely different in their nature and destinies. Those of the former they consider intelligent, and morally responsible. Those of the latter they consider as non-intelligent, and not morally responsible. They find in some countries a deficiency of vegetable food for the sustenance of man. They find a permission in the bible of the use of flesh; and many of them receive with gratitude what God has given to them. There is no command, however, in the Christian scriptures enjoining the use of flesh. Some converts entirely abstain from it; and all may act as they please respecting it. "One believeth", says Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ, under the direction of the spirit of God, "that he may eat all things; another who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him who eateth not, judge him that eateth: for God hath received him".

No one must imagine for a moment that Christianity tolerates *drunkenness*. Though wine, and other liquors, may be used by Christians for medicinal, and other useful purposes; they must never be indulged into such a degree as to injure the persons employing them. The scripture denounces excess in the strongest manner. Its precepts on this subject are the following:—"Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness". "Let us walk not in rioting and drunkenness".

It declares that they who continue in this sin shall not enter into the kingdom of God. Drunkards must, consequently, be viewed as strangers to Christianity. If they call themselves by the name of Christians, they either deceive themselves, or practise the grossest hypocrisy.

● I do not wonder that Mora Bhatta should accuse the Goa-kars of *disrespect* to others. I decidedly condemn all that is wrong in their conduct in this matter; but it must be borne in mind that the claims of the Brahmans are such as can never be considered as founded in justice. Though they are naturally in every respect like other men, they are set forth in the Hindu Shāstras as entitled to the most absurd veneration and regard. It is declared that the fire in the Brahmans' hands consumes the sin of the person who does them reverence; that presents presented to them procure the greatest merit, and make atonement for the most enormous offences; that they are to be worshipped; that they can injure the very gods by their curses; and that it is lawful to tell falsehoods in order to protect them!

उत्पत्तिरेवविप्रसूतिर्धर्मस्यजायते ॥

सहिधमार्थमुत्पन्नोद्भूयकल्पते ॥

ब्राह्मणो जायमाने हि प्रियव्यामधिजायते ॥

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां धर्मज्ञो ब्रह्मगुप्तये ॥

सर्वसंज्ञा ह्यणस्यैव कृत्स्निं विष्णुमतीतम् ॥

अहमेनामिजनेनेह सर्वव्याप्ता यो रक्षति ॥

समेव ब्राह्मणेभ्यो यो यो ह्यहं रक्षति ॥

आनुवंशात्माद्यणसंभवंतेहीतरेभ्यः ॥
 पुनातिपेत्किंवद्व्यासुसपसपवरावरान् ॥
 पृथिवोमपिचैविमांस्तत्सामेकापिचैवेति ॥

"The very birth of Bráhmans", says Manu "is a constant incarnation of Dharma, *God of Justice*; for the Bráhmaṇ is born to promote justice, and to procure ultimate happiness. When a Bráhmaṇ springs to light, he is born above the world, the chief of all creatures, assigned to guard the treasury of duties religious and civil. Whatever exists in the universe is all, in effect, *though not in form*, the wealth of the Bráhmaṇ; since the Bráhmaṇ is entitled to it all by his primogeniture and eminence of birth. The Bráhmaṇ eats but his own food; wears but his own apparel; and bestows but his own in alms: through the benevolence of the Bráhmaṇ, indeed, other mortals enjoy life. He confers purity on his living family, on his ancestors, and on his descendants as far as the seventh person; and he alone deserves to possess this whole earth". Such claims as these ought never to be admitted; and no accusation ought to be brought against those who deny their equity.

The Bráhmans, as far I have seen, are a great deal more disrespectful than the Portuguese or Goa-kars. They are frequently to be observed scowling upon their humble countrymen; commanding them to leave the common roads, lest they should be defiled by their shadows, or by

coming in contact with them; and otherwise treating them with the greatest contempt. Conduct such as this is highly to be condemned; and while it is practised, it is unbecoming in a high degree for the Hindu Priests to complain of the treatment which they receive from others. It is not necessary for me, however, to vindicate Christianity in this manner. This heavenly system is calculated, in the highest degree, to diffuse good will among men. The sum of its precepts on this subject is, "Though shalt love thy neighbour as thyself". Its special injunctions are:—
 "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love: in honour preferring one another. If it be possible as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. If thine enemy hunger feed him; if he thirst, give him drink. Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not: rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Mind not high things; but condescend to men of low degree. Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for there is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God. Render, therefore, to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Thou shalt not commit adultery: Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet. Have fervent charity among yourselves. Use hospitality one to another. Honour all men; love the brother-

hood. Fear God, Honour the king". This is morality, the purest, and the most sublime. These are the commandments which true Christians venerate, and according to which, through divine grace, and the assistance of the Holy Ghost, they conduct themselves. The perusal of them impresses even idolaters with the conviction of the excellence of the Bible*.

I trust that inquirers will not be prejudiced by the remarks of the Bhatta, which have now been exposed. In order to direct them in their researches, I shall briefly state the consequences of a cordial, and sincere, embracement of the religion of Jesus. These are of unspeakable moment, and they respect both this life and that which is to come. The persons who perceive the holiness, justice, and extent, of God's law; the odiousness, and danger, of sin; and their own responsibility, depravity, and guilt; and, who betake themselves to Jesus Christ as a refuge, put their trust in his righteousness, and rely on his grace, receive the pardon of all the iniquities which they have committed. They thus obtain the divine favour, which could not be procured by their own actions, which at the best are in many respects opposed to the commandments of God, and which, in all cases, fall short of his requisitions. God pours out the influences of the

* If any weight may be attached to verbal admissions, it may be confidently said, that this conviction is greatly on the increase among certain classes of the Natives in Bombay.

Holy Spirit upon them; and, by his agency, and the instrumentality of divine truth, they forsake that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good, obtain deliverance from the power and predominance of evil lusts and passions, and gradually become holy in heart, speech, and behaviour. The peace of God dwelleth within them; and they view the Creator as their father and their friend. In the time of their trouble and distress, they look to him for support and comfort; and for the sake of the Saviour, he imparts it to them in rich abundance. At the hour of death they are not forsaken; for he who loves them at the first, loves them unto the end. When their souls take their departure from the body, they are conducted into the heaven of bliss. In that happy region, they associate with the redeemed from among men, and the angels of God, behold the glory of the Lord and Saviour, contemplate the divine excellency, and engage in the divine praise and service. Their bodies shall at the end of the world be redeemed from the dust by the power of him through whom they are reduced to corruption. They shall be publicly declared righteous; and while those who have died in their sins, without a Saviour, are subjected to the curse of a holy God, and consigned to eternal woe, they shall be blessed and glorified. Their felicity shall continue to increase; and, as their Saviour's merit can never be exhausted, their happiness shall last throughout the ages of eternity.

Such are the blessings which attend a cordial embracement of Christianity by the Hindus. O that many of them may obtain them, and live for ever!

Salvation, and its accompanying blessings, cannot be the result of the observance of the means prescribed in the Hindu Shástras. These means of deliverance have no connexion with the true God, as must be apparent from the observations which have been made; and, on this account, as well as an account of their intrinsic unsuitableness, they must be pronounced inefficacious. Though some of them are of a mixed nature, they may be all arranged under six classes. Some of them respect the Bráhmans, some the gods, some the community in general, some the individuals themselves, some the dead, and some brute animals, and inanimate objects.

The Hindu Scriptures err most egregiously, when they teach that sin will be removed by the entertainment and worship of *Bráhmans*, and by granting them employment, and presenting them with gifts. As sin is an offence against God, the person who has committed it must be liable to the divine displeasure and wrath, till he is delivered through merit sufficient to cover it. Should services of the nature referred to be required by God, and should they even be perfectly performed, the guilt of the sin which has been committed would still remain. I am filled with pity when I perceive how my fellow creatures suffer themselves to be deluded on this subject.

A little inquiry would shew them that the writers of the Hindu Shāstras must have been Brāhmans, who were more desirous of their own benefit than the glory of God. This is apparent from the claims, and assertions of the Brāhmans. The remarks which I have already made on this subject, may not be without use; but it may be proper to extend them. The Brāhmans, according to the Hindu religion emanated from Brahmā's mouth. They only must read, and interpret the Veda. Their wrath is as dreadful as that of the gods. They, and their wives, and daughters, are to be worshipped. They have in many instances, kicked, and beaten, and cursed, and frightened, and degraded the gods, and destroyed their children. One of their number (Brahmaspati) is said to have turned the moon into a cinder; and another (Vishvakarma) to have cut the sun into twelve pieces. The same individual is said to have made heaven; and another of his caste is said to have made a child of grass, which Sítá could not distinguish from her own son. Kashyapa made fire; Brigu imparted to it its property of consumption, and Sapta gave its property of extinction. Agasti swallowed the sea at three sips, and gave it out again impregnated with salt. By such fabrications as these the attempt has been made to secure to the Brāhmans veneration and awe. The endeavour also has been made to secure to them their lives. They must not be killed for the most enormous

offences. When an individual weeps for any person whom they may have killed, *he* must make an atonement. Durgá is pleased with the blood of a man a thousand years; but no Bráhmán must be sacrificed to her. Garuda used to eat every sort of creature, except Bráhmáns who, if swallowed, would have caused an insufferable pain in his stomach. "A twice-born man", says Manu who barely assaults a Bráhmán with an intention to hurt him shall be whirled about for a century in the hell named Tamisra; but having smitten him in anger, and by design, even with a blade of grass, he shall be born in one and twenty transmigrations, from the wombs of impure quadrupeds". Life, however, must not only be preserved; but it must be rendered comfortable. The Bráhmáns get all the offerings made at the temples; and the most heinous sins are atoned for by giving them presents. If a man sell his cow, he will go to hell; if he give her in a donation to a Bráhmán he will go heaven. If on Gangá's anniversary whole villages be given to Bráhmáns, the person presenting them will acquire all the merit which can be obtained: his body will be a million of times more glorious than the sun; he will have a million of virgins, many carriages, palanquins with jewels; and he will live in heaven with his father as many years as there are particles in the land given to Bráhmáns. Land given to Bráhmáns secures heaven; a red cow, a safe passage across the boiling infernal Vetrant;

a house, a heavenly palace; an umbrella, freedom from scorching heat; shoes, freedom from pain when walking; perfumes freedom from offensive smells; feasting of Bráhmans the highest merit. If a house be defiled by an unclean bird sitting down upon it, it becomes pure when presented to a Bráhman. A proper gift to a Bráhman on a death bed will secure heaven to a malefactor. The Bráhmans oblige the other casts when they condescend to receive any thing from them. I must herestop. It must be evident, as I have said, that the Hindu religion was framed by Bráhmans, and not by God. Those men are sadly deluded who think that they will obtain pardon and salvation from them, or by offerings made to them.

The service of the *Hindu gods*, as a cause of the removal of sin, is equally inefficacious as the service of the Bráhmans. The meditation, on the gods, whether as *smarana*, *manana*, *nididhyéga*, or *sákshátkára*; the taking of their names; the celebrating of their praises; the performance of vows on their behalf, whether distinguished as *vrata*, or as *kémana* and *ménana*; the building of temples for them, or the erection of images; the offering to them gifts, the performance of sacrifice and burnt sacrifice; the addressing them in prayer; the listening to their Shástras; the repetition of the Gayatrí; and all the other rites which respect them, are positively and directly sinful; in as much, as according to what has been already shewn, these gods are no gods,

but merely imaginary sinful beings. The true God must condemn such services as those referred to; and, even though the persons performing them should profess to regard *him* as their object, they could not be viewed as an atonement for sin. God requires all the services of men; and supposing them rendered at any given period, as they never are, they could not make amends for deficiencies. A debt contracted with a merchant is not cancelled though every article subsequently purchased be regularly paid for.

The exercise of hospitality, the relief of the poor and afflicted, the planting of trees, the digging of wells, and tanks, and other works of a like nature performed for the benefit of the *community* are commendable. They cannot atone, however, for the sin of the soul, which is committed against the majesty of heaven, and which involves the charge of rebellion against the supreme God.

Most of the ceremonies which have a special reference to the *worshippers themselves*, I hold to be decidedly sinful. It is a great delusion to suppose that a crime is atoned for by the punishment inflicted by a magistrate. The allegation, in fact, implies that there is no God, whose offended law requires satisfaction. The man who betakes himself to a forest, for the purpose of ending his days, only deprives his friends of the aid which he is bound to render them, and the influence which would arise from his alleged piety.

The person who performs ablution at his own door, or who proceeds, with this object in view, to sacred places, forgets that no water can reach his heart which is the seat of sin, or blot out the record of his guilt from the book of God's remembrance. Fasting and self-inflicted torments, though they are represented as the sources of a merit which deifies the person who practises them, and which terrifies the gods, sometimes prevent the service of God, and can in no situation alter the resolution of God to punish the workers of iniquity: they would not even avail before an earthly prince. The use of the *Panchagavya*,* the suppression of the breath, and other atonements of a like nature are so trifling that they ought never to be mentioned. The performance of *Sati*, on the funeral pile, or on the banks of the Ganges, and the prostration before the moving wheels of an idol's chariot, form the worst species of murder, the species from which nature revolts, and that which must be in the highest degree displeasing to God, who has given life in order that it may be preserved by all lawful means, and which is even regarded by the brute animals.

The doctrine that the *dead* receive benefit from the *Shrad,dhas*, or other services performed on their behalf by their surviving relatives, is opposed to the best interests of morality. It di-

* The five products of the cow.

minishes the fear of punishment in the wicked; and encourages them in their sin, inasmuch as it excites the hope of future deliverance, without any regard to their moral state as personally responsible. It is vain, then, to expect, that any merit will arise from these rites to those who practise them. They encourage the grossest delusion; and they place ceremonies in the room of that purity of heart which God demands, and view insignificant services as equally available with the divine forgiveness.

The worship of *inanimate objects*, and *brute animals*, though recommended in the Hindu Shástras, and daily practised by the Bráhmans and others, is in the highest degree absurd and sinful. The sun, the moon, and the stars; and the five elements,—earth, water, fire, air, and ether, have all been created by God; and the performance of their service is like the worst kind of idolatry. The promises made respecting some of these objects, as that which refers to the waters of the Ganges, in which it is declared that they take away all sin, must be viewed as palpable falsehoods. The bare reverencing of cows, monkeys, dogs, jackals, birds, and other animals, implies that these creatures are superior to men, which a child must know is not the case. The worship of trees, plants, books, the shalagrama, and logs of wood,* one would think could only

* Full information on the different means of atoning for sin, and procuring merit, according to the Hindu religion, is to be

be practised by infants instructed to do so by their nurses, or by persons derived of intellect.

I do not see any means of salvation in the Hindu religion, which can be approved by a holy God; and as faith must have a right object on which to rest, as well as be exercised in a right degree, I cannot but view the confidence which is reposed in those which are alleged as in the highest degree dangerous and ruinous.* They all proceed on the principle that man has the power of saving himself. This, however, as we formerly remarked, is not the case. Men are weak, and ignorant, and naturally devoted to sin. They never love God, as they ought to do with all their hearts, and soul, and strength, and mind. They daily offend against God in thought, and word, and deed. If it be admitted, then, that by their own actions they can save themselves, it must be granted that sin is a light matter. The angels, as we have formerly observed, might begin to say, If we sin we may recover ourselves. Men would grow more intent upon wickedness. The authority of God's law would be despised;

found in the third Volume of "Ward's View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindus". This work is by far the most important which has yet been published on the subject of which it treats. It is distinguished alike by deep research, diligent observation, and accurate statement.

* The popular idea of the Hindus is, that "Whatever is believed to be saving, must have the power of saving". The Bráhmans are not exempted from this error. They frequently violently contend with the Missionaries in favour of the principle, and endeavour to give the most absurd illustrations of it.

and he would appear weak, and contemptible, and destitute of a perfect hatred of sin, and love of holiness, which are essential to his character. The most plausible means of salvation to which self-righteousness resorts, are repentance and prayer; but however necessary these exercises may be, they ought never to be viewed as the procuring cause of salvation. No earthly king, on giving his laws to his subjects, would ever say that "These laws ought to be obeyed; but if they be violated, nothing more is to be resorted to in the case, than the indulgence of sorrow, and the imprecation of the name of the sovereign". An announcement of this nature would be attended with universal disobedience; and it cannot, for one moment, be supposed that the King of kings, and Lord of lords, would ever make it with regard to the subjects of his universal empire. Nothing can be done by him, or sanctioned, in opposition to his holiness and justice. These attributes, in combination with mercy, as has been already shewn, are revealed only in the Christian religion, by means of the atonement of Jesus Christ, which is infinitely precious, and which is sufficient in its efficacy for all who will rest upon it.

The Hindu religion affords no reasonable ground of hope to the conscious sinner on the great subject of salvation. The very deliverance which it holds out, but which cannot be expected, is unworthy of the character of God to bestow, and unsatisfactory to the desires of men.

The doctrine of *Sāyujyatā*, or absorption into the divine essence, which is considered as the highest species of bliss (*mukti*), originates in a palpable error respecting the nature of the spirits of God and men, which, from the ignorance and sin and suffering which are attached to the latter, must be viewed as essentially distinct from one another. The prospect of its possession is cold and cheerless, and is tantamount to annihilation. *Salokatā*, the residence in the heavenly world without the privilege of approaching the gods; *Sarupatā*, a conformity of disposition to the gods; and *Samipatā*, a residence in their immediate presence, having all a direct reference to gods which are no gods, and who possess the worst moral character, can neither be valued nor desired by those who love holiness, and who wish to be associated only with the good. The possession of them, moreover, is altogether uncertain. The sins of posterity, as, in the case of a person who tells a lie, which is said to bring fourteen generations from heaven to hell,* may completely remove them from those on whom they have been bestowed! The austerities of other mortals may rob, as has often been the case in the time that is past, both the gods and their companions of all their enjoyment, deprive them of their thrones, and banish them from heaven! The merits of men themselves, it is said, must sooner

* A lie may notwithstanding be atoned for by a single repitition of the name of Vishnu!

or later be exhausted, and a long succession of births, of a humiliating and disgusting nature, be again experienced, before redemption be again bestowed!

A little consideration will shew that the Hindu religion, which is alike unreasonable and evil in its services and consequences, ought never to be attributed to God, and trusted in by man. I earnestly call upon every person, who entertains the slightest regard to his Creator, or the feeblest desire for his own welfare, or that of his friends, in this life or in that which is to come, immediately to forsake it. It is to those who embrace it, and adhere to it the road to death, and everlasting destruction.* It robs, as we have seen, the divine Being of every excellence. It obscures our notions of his existence, reproaches all his attributes, attributes to him the vilest passions, and ascribes to him the worst actions. It extinguishes in the mind the veneration, and gratitude, and love which ought ever to be exercised toward him. It changes his glory into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. It depraves the reason, and judgement of those who are its votaries; fills their imagination with impure thoughts; and permits them, in many cases, to practise sin with impurity. It shuts their eyes to the view of their moral misery, and deceives them with false and unworthy hopes of salvation.

* See Appendix N.

Many other evils are connected with it; and the attempt to adorn it, like "ornamenting a dead body, only renders it more loathsome".* The person who does not "suspect it" must either be considered as destitute of a love of truth, or the willing subject of the strongest delusion. Its very framers clearly saw its instability, for they have declared that it will be destroyed. They cannot receive much credit for their sagacity in the case, however, because every one must know that truth alone can finally prevail. The detriment which for many ages Hinduism has inflicted on the inhabitants of India is, amongst others, a claimant reason for the persons of the present day to forsake it. As long as they adhere to it, they must be considered as apostates from the service of that God in whom they live, and move, and have their being. In declaring that they will continue to remain in it, because their forefathers walked according to it, they act in a manner no more rational, and safe, than the Ramoshís and Bhíls, and Pendarís, and other hereditary robbers, who disturb the country, and molest the lawful government. They are guilty of such folly, in regard to the most momentous of all subjects, as they never would practise in the common affairs of life. Who would reject wealth because his ancestors were poor; or knowledge, because they were ignorant? Who, then, ought to refuse deliverance from evil because his ancestors were

* A proverb current among the Marát, has.

involved in it; or hesitate to embrace Christianity, the only religion proposed by God, because his ancestors were unacquainted with it?

Great Britain, the country from which I come, was once as far removed from the way of righteousness as India. Superstition, and cruelty maintained their bloody and destructive sway over its benighted inhabitants; and, in regard to religion, it was in many respects similar to this country. In the mercy of God, however, the religion of Jesus was proclaimed in the land. The people, being ignorant of its evidence and excellence, at first strenuously opposed its entrance, and persecuted those who proclaimed its truths. They declared their intention of adhering to the custom of their ancestors; and they proved decidedly averse to inquiry and consideration. The ministers of the Saviour, however, remained unmoved. They put their trust in God, and implored his blessing. They used no force or violence; but they appealed to reason and conscience. They addressed their auditors as sinners. They warned them to flee from the wrath to come. They presented to them the offers of pardon by Jesus Christ, of sanctification by the holy Spirit, and of eternal glory. They were instant in season, and out of season, in seeking the welfare of those to whom they were sent. God regarded them with his favour; and a change began to appear. Our forefathers commenced seriously to listen to the truth, and it penetrated

into their hearts. "Our fathers erred", they said, "and we shall no longer walk in their ways. We will worship the only living and true God, and cleave to him alone. We will esteem Jesus Christ as the only Saviour, and by the help of God, we will follow his commands". They destroyed their idols and forsook the forms of worship, which were inconsistent with the demands of Him, who requires to be worshipped in spirit and in truth. They sought the encrease of their knowledge, and the possession of peace. They received the blessing of God; and walked in the divine favour. Their posterity have been happy, according as they have obeyed the statutes of God. Our country is indebted to Christianity for the enjoyment of all that is great and glorious among its possessions. Other lands have the same obligation; and since Christ appeared in the world, 1832 years ago, many nations have been blessed in his name. The persons, who wish to propagate Christianity in India are its greatest friends. They seek to injure no one. They pray and labour for the improvement of all. It is the desire of their heart that knowledge and civilization may be diffused; that sin may be destroyed; that prosperity may be enjoyed; and especially that souls may be saved.

I must now take leave of my readers. I have endeavoured, on my own responsibility, to declare what I consider the truth on the most important of all subjects. I pray that God may

accompany my efforts with a blessing. If I have injured any one, and particularly my friend against whom I have contended, I ask forgiveness. I shall be ready, I trust, at any time to answer what may be said in reply. I beseech the Hindus whom I have addressed to consider the subject in all its details; and especially those of them who may have any anxiety for their eternal interests. Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.

चावत्स्वस्मिन्देहं चावन्मृत्युश्च दूरतः ॥

तावदात्माहितं कुर्यात् प्राणान्ते किं करिष्यति ॥ ४

“It is whilst the body is in health, and death is yet far distant, that a man should look after the interests of his soul. What can he do at the last hour”.—That God may enlighten and save many of the inhabitants of India, is my most fervent prayer.

JOHN WILSON.

B

APPENDIX.

A. [p. 33.] *Effects of Education among the Hindus.*

“WITHIN the last few years European knowledge has been widely spread among the natives. The rich treasures that may be found in the English language have been liberally bestowed upon them—History, by depicting before their eyes the actions of men from the earliest stages of society, opened to them the mysteries of the Greek and Roman Mythologies, and they accordingly were led to discover the follies of their own by comparing them together. Geography by unfolding to them the nature, form, and shape of the globe had a tendency to destroy their prejudices. European science led them to throw off their bigotry and superstition by expanding their minds and elevating their intellects. Knowledge spread her benign influence over them; the vanishing of ignorance was the vanishing of superstition, and, therefore, will also be the vanishing of moral degradation. Light dawned upon them to the great perplexity of those who ‘hated it because their deeds were dark’. The wilful deceiver will soon be thunderstruck when his tricks will be more particularly discovered. Education is working on, and the ‘School Master is abroad’. More will soon be effected than perhaps now anticipated. If improvement goes on in the same ratio in which it has lately come—if in a few years and under so many disadvantages that had a wicked tendency to crib and confine the intellect,—if in spite of the boy’s being prevented by authority from availing himself of a fair field for discussion on religious topics—he has asserted his responsibility as a moral agent, and his independence as a man—what more must we expect now that so many means are open to the Hin-

du Youth and so much assistance is afforded him in delivering his mind from the prejudices of his forefathers!—Our anticipations go far when we reflect upon these. We feel ourselves transported into pleasant and happy scenes; we perceive that the Hindu begins to assume a more liberal spirit in his dealings with the world; we foresee that he gives up his weak conformities to old customs and speak with a reformed voice. Accordingly if such a pleasing and a happy field is before us, the reformer should bring into actions all the energies his mind is capable of. Let this be brought to a happy close. Let there be no pause, or fearful halt—before the object is gained—till the triumph is complete”.—*Calcutta Enquirer*, Dec. 23, 1831.

Every philanthropist must rejoice at this happy issue, and these glorious prospects. It is deeply to be regretted, however, that from the Anglo-Indian College, which has been principally instrumental in bringing about the changes adverted to, the Christian religion has hitherto been altogether excluded; and that a most unjust and injudicious attempt was made a few months ago by the managers of that institution, to prevent the attendance of the students on a series of lectures delivered by the Rev. Messrs. Duff and Hill. It is to be hoped [that the Honorable Company, and the Native and European Subscribers, will speedily perceive it to be both their duty and their interest to encourage the only religious system, which can speak peace to the sinner, and which can prepare immortal souls for the enjoyment of eternal felicity. It is more than rumoured that important measures of improvement are in contemplation.

B. [p. 34.] *Remarks on Brahma.*

If we take the Shāstras as a ground of judgement, we must admit that the Hindus have exceedingly confused and derogatory ideas of the Unity of the God-head. In addition to the remarks contained in the text, it may not be improper to introduce an extract from Mill's History of India:—

“Few nations shall we find without a knowledge of the Unity of the Divine Nature, if we take such expressions of it as

abound in the Hindu writings for satisfactory evidence. By this token Mr. Park found it among the savages of Africa.

"In pursuance of the same persuasion, ingenious authors have laid hold of the term Brahme, (or Brahma,) the neuter of Brahmá, the Masculine name of the creator. This they have represented as the peculiar appellation of the one God; Brahmá, Vishnu, and Siva, being only names of the particular modes of divine action. But the supposition (for it is nothing more) involves the most enormous inconsistency; as if the Hindus possessed refined notions of the Unity of God, and could yet conceive his modes of action to be truly set forth in the characters of Brahmá, Vishnu, and Siva; as if the same people could at once be so enlightened as to form a sublime conception of the Divine Nature, and yet so stupid as to make a distinction between the character of God, and his modes of action. The parts of the Hindu writings, however, which are already before us, completely refute this gratuitous epithet of praise, applied to various gods; and no are more indicative of refined notions of the Unity, or any perfection of the Divine Nature, than other parts of their panegyrical devotions. We have already beheld Siva decorated with this title. Vishnu is denominated the Supreme Brahme in the Bhagvat-Gítá. Nay, we find this Brahme, the great, the eternal ONE, the supreme soul, employed in rather a subordinate capacity. "The Great Brahm", says Crishna, "is my womb. In it I place my foetus; and from it is the the production of all nature. The great Brahm is the womb of all those various forms which are conceived in every natural womb, and I am the father who soweth the seed". In one of the morning prayers of the Bráhmans, cited from the Vedas by Mr. Colebrooke, water is denominated Brahme. "The sun", says Yajnyawalcya, "is Brahme; this is a certain truth revealed in the sacred Upanishats, and various sac'has of the Vedas. So the Bhawishya Purána, speaking of the sun: Because there is none greater than he, nor has been nor will be, therefore he is celebrated as the supreme soul in all the Vedas". Air, too, receives the sp-

pellation of Brahme. Thus, says a passage in the Veda; "That which moves in the atmosphere is air, *Brahme*. Thus again; "Salutation unto thee, O air! Even thou art Brahme, present to our apprehension. Thee I will call, 'present Brahme': thee I will name, 'the right one': thee I will pronounce, 'the true one'. May that Brahme, the universal being entitled air, preserve me". Food too is denominated Brahme; so is breath, and intellect, and felicity. Nay it is affirmed, as part of the Hindu belief, that man himself may become Brahme; thus in the *Bhagvat-Gita* Krishna declares: "A man being endowed with a purified understanding, having humbled his spirit by resolution, and abandoned the objects of the organs; who hath freed himself from passion and dislike, who worshipeth with discrimination, eateth with moderation, and is humble of speech, of body, and of mind; who preferreth the devotion of meditation, and who constantly placeth his confidence in dispassion; who is freed from ostentation, tyrannic strength, vain glory, lust, anger, and avarice; and who is exempt from selfishness, and in all things temperate, is formed for being Brahme".

Some Missionaries have used the term *Brahma* as equivalent to the word God; and Col. Vans Kennedy, has proposed that it should be employed in this sense in translations of the sacred Scriptures. The most serious objections, however, must be urged against the adoption of the word. "In the first place", observes my friend Mr. Law, whose attainments in Sanskrita literature are of the very first order, "*Brahma* is of the neuter gender; so that if in order to express the idea of the Supreme Being, it is necessary to have recourse to the Hindu philosophy, *Paramatma* would be preferable, and has, I believe, been employed in some versions. But such terms are as remote as possible from conveying any thing like the true notion of God, considered as the moral governor of the universe; being always employed in Sanskrita works to designate the all-pervading Spirit, the *Anima Mundi*, of which neither personal, nor any active attribute can be predicated. It would,

indeed, have been quite as reasonable for the Seventy Interpreters, through a fear of confounding the true God with the objects of national idolatry, to have adopted from the Grecian Philosophical Sects, some such term as "to pleroma", "to en", in order to express the supreme Being, as for the modern translator of the sacred Scriptures into Sanskrita, to employ any such terms as Brahma for the same purpose. Yet the impropriety of the former supposition is sufficiently obvious.

"Besides, as Dr. Mill correctly observes. "The word expressing God in any language should be such as in enunciating the proposition "God is one"—*Deus Unus*—should convey a marked denial of the polytheistic proposition, *Dei plures sunt*; or there are more Gods than one". But it is evidently impossible, without a glaring solecism, to speak of Brahma in the plural number. Would not the first commandment, for instance, translated in this manner, appear to be sheer nonsense?
 अहमोखरोवद्रज्ञानमदनेभन्यमज्ञानिधायकसे

"It is urged that when Deva is employed in Sanskrita to express the Supreme Being, its bearing that signification is only determined by the context. But will not the context of Scripture be sufficient to point out in what sense Devu is to be understood?" *Oriental Christian Spectator*, September 1831.

C. [p. 39.] *Contradictory Character of the Purānas.*

Some of the Shlokas which I have quoted in reference to the claims of the different Hindu Divinities have been extracted from Mr. H. H. Wilson's interesting essay on the Hindu Sects, contained in the sixteenth volume of the *Transactions of the Asiatic Society*. As the circulation of this volume has hitherto been limited, on account of its not having been republished like its predecessors in England, the following extract will not prove unacceptable.

"In further illustration of our text, with regard to the instrumentality of the *Purānas* in generating religious distinctions amongst the Hindus, and as affording a view of the *Vaishnava*

feelings on this subject, we may appeal to the *Padma Purāna*. In the *Uttara Khānda*, or last portion of this work, towards the end of it, several sections are occupied with a dialogue between SIVA and PARVATI, in which the former teaches the latter the leading principles of the *Vaishnava* faith. Two short sections are devoted to the explanation of who are heretics, and which are the heretical works. All are *Pāshāndas*, SIVA says, who adore other gods than VISHNU, or who hold, that other deities, are his equals, and all Brāhmanas who are not *Vaishnavas*, are not to be looked at, touched, nor spoken to.

"SIVA, in acknowledging that the distinguishing marks of his votaries, the skull, tiger's skin, and ashes, are reprobated by the Vedas (*Srutigerhitam*) states, that he was directed by VISHNU to inculcate their adoption, purposely to lead those who assumed them into error.—NAMUCHI and other *Daityas* had become so powerful by the purity of their devotions, that INDRA and the other gods were unable to oppose them. The gods had recourse to VISHNU, who in consequence, ordered SIVA to introduce the *Saiva* tenets and practices, by which the *Daityas* were beguiled, and rendered 'wicked, and thence weak'.

"In order to assist SIVA in this work, ten great Sages were imbued with the *Tamasa* property, or property of darkness and ignorance, and by them such writings were put forth as were calculated to disseminate unrighteous and heretical doctrines, these were KANADA, GAUTAMA, SAKTI, UPAMANYU, JAIMINI, KAPILA, DURVASAS, MRİKANDA, VRISHASPATI, and BHARGAVA.

"By Siva himself, the *Pasupata* writings were composed; KANADA is the author of the *Vaisheshika* philosophy. The *Nyāya* originates with GAUTAMA. KAPILA, is the founder of the *Sāṅkhya* school, and VRISHASPATI of the *Chārvāka*, JAIMINI, by SIVAS orders, composed the *Mīmāṃsa*, which is heretical, in as far as it inculcates works in reference to faith, and SIVA himself, in the disguise of a Brāhman, or as Vyāsa, promulgated the Vedānta, which is heterodox in *Vaishnava* estimation, by denying the sensible attributes of the deity. VISHNU, as BUDDHA, taught the *Bauddha Śāstra*, and the practices of go-

ing naked, or wearing blue garments, meaning, consequently, not the *Bauddhas*, but the *Jainas*, वैदुषास्त्रमसत्प्रोक्तमग्नौ
 लपटादिकं The *Purāṇas* were partly instrumental in this business of blinding mankind, and they are thus distinguished by our authority and all the *Vaiṣṇava* works.

"The *Matsya*, *Kurma*, *Liṅga*, *Saiva*, *Skanda*, and *Āgneya*, are *Tamasa*, or the works of darkness, having more or less of a *Saiva* bias.

"The *Vishnu*, *Nārāyaṇa*, *Bhāgavat*, *Gārura*, *Pādma*, and *Vārāha*, are *Sātvika*, pure and true; being, in fact, *Vaiṣṇava* text books.

"The *Brahmānda*, *Brāhma Vaiṣṇava*, *Mārkaṇḍeya*, *Bhaviṣya*, *Vāmana* and *Brāhma*, are of the *Rājasa* cast, emanating from the quality of passion. As far as I am acquainted with them, they lean to the *Sākta* division of the Hindus, or the worship of the female principle. The *Mārkaṇḍeya* does so notoriously, containing the famous *Chandī Pāth*, or *Durgā Māhātmya*, which is read at the *Durgā Pujā*; the *Brahma Vaiṣṇava*, is especially dedicated to KRISHNA as GOVINDA, and is principally occupied by him and his mistress RADHA. It is also full on the subject of *Prakṛiti* or personified nature.

"A similar distinction is made even with the *Smritis*, or works on law. The codes of VASISHTHA HARITA, VYASA, PARASARA, BHARDWAJA and KASYAPA, are of the pure order. Those of YAJÑAWALKYA, ATRI, TITTIRI, DAKSHA, KATYAYANA, and VISHNU of the *Rājasa* class, and those of GAUTAMA, *Vṛishaspati*, SAMVARTTA, YAMA, SANKHA, and USANAS, are of the *Tamasa* order.

"The study of the *Purāṇas* and *Smritis* of the *Sātvika* class, secures *Mukti*, or final emancipation, that of those of the *Rājasa* obtains *Swarga*, or Paradise; whilst that of the *Tamasa* condemns a person to hell, and a wise man will avoid them".

D. Legend of Divodāsa.

. A converted Brāhman, who was the first individual who brought this story under my notice, observed that even before

he had embraced Christianity, or known any thing of the system, it had inspired strong doubts in his mind respecting Hinduism. It might well produce this effect! Divodása, on account of his piety receives a boon from Brahmá and in consequence Shiva retires from Kashi (a pretty good movement for a God) and "the wise and illustrious Divodása" to quote the words of the Skanda Parána, "took possession, without rival, of Varanasi, and there established the seat of his government; and, ruling with justice, increased the prosperity of his people"... "But when Divodása had reigned for eight thousand years, the gods, becoming desirous of revenge, repaired to their preceptor Brihaspati, and thus consulted him:—'*O divine sage! we GODS SHALL SUFFER EXTREME DISTRESS, should this king obtain the beneficial RESULT OF HIS FIETY and of his numerous sacrifices; for he governs his people as if they were his own children, and his enemies he subdues with ease*'. (!!!) Brihaspati replied,—'*O dwellers in heaven! one of the four resources of peace and war must be adopted, for unless that king acts voluntarily he cannot be vanquished; and this is the one named dissension, for could disagreement be created between him and the gods of the earth (the Bráhmans,) many of whom are partial to us, his prosperity would cease in one moment*'.*... "I do not, understand", quoth Mrs. Párvati, "why thou art obliged to remain absent from that city, in which thou so much delightest. Well pleased, Shiva drank the nectar of her words, while she thus sweetly praised Varanasi,† and then said:—'*O my beloved! in consequence of a boon granted by Brahmá to Divodása, no other power can exist in Kashi as long as justice and virtue prevail in it. How then can he be deprived of Kashi, since he rules over his people with such virtue that piety alone flourishes in his kingdom?*' The God here ended, and revolved in thought the means by which he might accomplish his wish, and then regarding Devi, he summoned a band of Yoginis, whom he thus

* The gods, in consequence, attempt to carry this advice into effect, but prove unsuccessful.—Col. Kennedy.

† This long panegyric on the holy city, which is introduced so *mal-à-propos*, I have omitted.—Col. Kennedy.

addressed:—“O Yoginis! hasten to my city of Kashi, where the king Divodāsa has reigned too long:—*subvert his virtue, and thus effect his ruin.*” Having heard this order, the Yoginis made their obeisance to Shiva, and departed to Kashi.

“Hara, still abiding on Mount Mandara, thus again began to reflect:—“The Yoginis and the Sun have not yet returned; so difficult it is for me to obtain tidings respecting Kashi. Whom now shall I employ to relieve me from this consuming desire to revisit it my Kashi; or is there one more skilled or wise than Brahmā?” Having thus thought, he summoned Brahmā; and, having received him with all due honour, thus addressed him:—“O lotus-born! I first sent the Yoginis and then the Sun to Kashi, but they have not yet returned; and nothing can alleviate the pain which oppresses me, in consequence of my absence from it. Nor is the feverish heat produced by my separation from my beloved city assuaged by the cool drops of amrit which the Moon sheds on my head. Therefore, O Brahmā! *do thou hasten to Kashi, and employ thy wisdom in order to procure me relief; for thou knowest the cause of my quitting it, and that I cannot there return until Divodāsa is voluntarily induced to abandon it. But thou art able to effect this by thy deception, and to restore me to that Kashi which I so long to revisit.*” This heard Brahmā obeyed the orders of Shiva, and, mounting his swan-drawn car, proceeded to Kashi; and there arriving, he assumed the form of an aged Brāhman, and sought the king.*

“As Ganesha delayed to return from Kashi, Shiva thus addressed Vishnu:—“*Do thou also proceed there; and delay not in executing my wish, as those have done whom I before sent.*” Vishnu replied:—“*To the best of my ability and understanding will I, O Shankara! accomplish thy wish; and having thus spoken,*

* It is unnecessary to transcribe the conversation which takes place between the King and Brahma, as it contains nothing interesting. But the result was, that Brahma was so pleased with the piety of Divodāsa, that he did not attempt to deprive him of Kashi, but remained in Kashi in an abode provided for him by the king, officiating at sacrifices, and teaching the Vedas.—Col. K.

On Brahma's not returning Shiva sends a selected band of his *ganga*, of attendants, and then Ganesha to Kashi, but with as little success.—Col. K.

and paid due obeisance to Shīva, Hari, accompanied by Lakshmi and Garura, proceeded to Kashi, a little to the north of which he formed, by his divine power, a pleasant abode, which was named Dharma-Kshetram, and there, attended by his lovely spouse, did the lord of Shri, the deluder of the three worlds, reside, under the form of Buddha; while Lakshmi became a female recluse of that sect. Garura also appeared under the name of Panyakirti, as a pupil, with a book in his hand, and attentively listening to the *delusive* instructions of his preceptor; who, with a low, sweet, and affectionate voice, taught him various branches of natural and supernatural knowledge.

“He then thus spoke:—‘*The only person who is truly virtuous is the Bhuddist*’; therefore submissively listen, for submission is the ornament of a pupil, while I explain to thee the doctrines of that faith”...“*Lakshmi, also, under the name of Vidgnana Kaumadi, inflamed the minds of the women of Kashi with the delusive precepts of the Buddhist faith, and taught them to place all happiness in sensual pleasures*”:—...“Such doctrines the women of the city heard from Vidgnana Kaumadi; and then, communicating them to their husbands, *induced them by their blandishments to embrace the delusive faith of Bhuddha*. Vidgnana Kaumadi also attracted the women by rendering the barren mothers, by curing the sick, by giving them charms to increase their beauty, and by other artifices; and by such means she accomplished the *deception of all the women of Kashi*. Punyakirti, also, diffused throughout the city the doctrines of Buddha; and thus the inhabitants of Kashi were led to *forsake the holy religion of the Vedas*.”

“As these heretic doctrines obtained a prevalence in his kingdom, the power of Divodása was gradually diminished, and he became grieved and dispirited. At length Vishnu, assuming the appearance of a Brāhman, visited the king, and was received by him with all due courtesy and honour”. He succeeded in inducing Divodása to abandon the throne.—In Kennedy’s work, from which this extract is taken, there are many interesting selections from the Purānas.

E. Tract against the Prevailing System of Hindu Idolatry, by Brojomohon Deboshyo.

THE quotation which I have given at page 48 is taken from a small work with this title published at Calcutta in 1824. It forms the subject of the Review in the Friend of India entitled "Hindu Polytheism". Though the Reviewer expressly declares that "of its author we have been able to discover no trace beyond his name," it was most ungenerously and unjustly insinuated in certain quarters, that the author was a native attached to the Serampore Missionaries. In the preface to the first English Edition of the pamphlet, the following statement is made. "The Author of the treatise was Brojomohon Mojmudar, a native of Bengal, belonging to the fourth class of the Hindus. Rammohon Roy, his intimate friend, has communicated to the translator the following particulars concerning him:—

"Brojomohon's father was a person of respectability, and was once employed as Dewan by Mr. Middleton, one of the late Residents at court of Lucknow. Brojomohon was a good Bengalee scholar, and had some knowledge of Sanskrit. He had made considerable progress in the study of the English language, and was also well versed in astronomy; and at the time of his death, was engaged in translating Fergusson's Astronomy into the Bengalee for the School-Book Society. He was a follower of the Vedant doctrine, in so far as to believe God to be a pure spirit; but he denied that the human soul was an emanation from God: and he admired very much the morality of the New Testament. Being suddenly taken ill of a bilious fever on the 5th of April last, he begged his friend Rammohon Roy to procure him the aid of a European physician, which request was immediately complied with; but it was too late:—the medicine administered did not produce the desired effect, and he died the very same night, aged thirty-seven years".

It is a matter of rejoicing that there are now several Reformers among the Hindus, who are disposed to go much farther than Braja Mohana.

F. [p. 50.] *Hindu Morals depraved by the Stories of Krishna.*

"Although, also, it cannot be denied", remarks Lieutenant Col. Kennedy in his *Researches* lately published, "that there are not a few censurable legends in the sacred books of the Hindus, still those selected for the instruction of youth are never liable to objection, as they always contain the purest principles of morality, and exalted notions of the Deity; though the Christian world would, of course, disapprove of some of the observances and tenets which the Hindu children are necessarily taught, as constituting the religion of their fathers". This is a strange statement. A few passages from the Hindu Shástras of the nature alleged, would be a real curiosity; and the general use of them among the native youth would be a circumstance over which many would rejoice. The fact of the matter, however, is that the selections which are commonly made for the instruction of youth, are of the very worst kind; and that the abominable tales about Krishna, of which we have given a few specimens, are known throughout the length and breadth of the land. The only part of the Bhágavata which has been translated into Marátí is the tenth Skanda; and the perusal of it, in many of the village schools, is undoubtedly in the highest degree destructive to the morality of the people.

I may here notice Colonel Kennedy's estimate of the morality of the natives, as it is expressed in the page of his work, from which I have now made a quotation. "If filial love and respect", he observes, "fraternal affection, kindness to every animated being, the detestation of every dishonest act, adherence to truth, and, in short, all that can form the mind to rectitude, be admitted to constitute morality, such are the lessons which are carefully taught to every Hindu child. Nor are even the minor morals neglected; so that in propriety and decorum of manners the Hindu will, in general, be found to surpass the European, child". These sentiments accord with the remarks which the author formerly made on Mill's history of India; but "the truth will come out". Colonel Kennedy in the Appendix to his *Mythological Researches*, has

condemned the natives, including even the learned and respectable of them in the strongest terms. When adverting to Colonel Wilford's statement respecting his directing his Pandit to make extracts from the Puránas under proper heads, and his arousing him by unfolding our ancient mythology &c. he declares "It is surprizing that the *slightest acquaintance* with the natives should not have satisfied Lieutenant Colonel Wilford that *not one of them was capable of executing such a task as this*; and that it would in consequence INEVITABLY lead the individual confided in to secure his employer's favour, by having recourse to *invention and imposture*". I have not the slightest wish to represent the Hindus, as in the smallest degree worse than they are; and, while I admit that they are not all equally depraved, I must state it as my opinion, and that of many persons, who have observed them for a much longer period than myself, that the general morality of the country is exactly what might be expected from the depraved, but approved, examples and precepts of of the Shástras.

G. [p. 51.] *Ráma Avatára.*

The occasion of this Avatára is thus stated in the translation of Válmiki's Rámáyana, by Drs. Carey and Marshman.

"Rishya-shringa than supplicated the gods assembled for their share of the sacrifice (saying,) "This devout king Dasha-ratha, who through the desire of offspring, confiding in you, has performed sacred austerities, and who has offered to you the sacrifice called Ashwa-medha, is about to perform another sacrifice for the sake of obtaining sons. To him thus desirous of offspring be pleased to grant the blessing: I supplicate you all with joined hands. May he have four sons renowned through the universe". The gods replied to the sage's son supplicating with joined hands, "Be it so. Thou O Brámhan, art ever to be regarded by us, as the king is, in a peculiar manner. The lord of men, by this sacrifice shall obtain the great object of his desires. Having thus said, the gods, preceded by Indra, disappeared.

"They all then having seen that (sacrifice) performed by the great sage according to the ordinance, went to Prajapati the lord of mankind, and, with joined hands, addressed Brahmá the giver of blessings, "O Brahmá, the Rákshas, Rávana by name, to whom a blessing was awarded by thee, through pride troubleth all of us the gods, and even the great sages, who perpetually practise sacred austerities. We, O glorious one, regarding the promise formerly granted by thy kindness that he should be invulnerable to the gods, the Dánavas and the Yakshas, have borne all (his oppression;) this lord of Rákshas therefore distresses the universe; and inflated by this promise, unjustly vexes the divine sages, the Yakshas, the Gundharvas, the Asuras, and men: where Rávana remains there the sun loses his force, the winds through fear of him do not blow; the fire ceases to burn; the rolling ocean, seeing him ceases to move its waves. Vishravana* distressed by his power has abandoned Lanka and fled. O divine one, save us from Rávana, who fills the world with noise and tumult. O giver of desired things, be pleased to contrive a way for his destruction'.

"Brahmá thus informed by the devas, reflecting, replied "Oh! I have devised the method for slaying this outrageous tyrant. Upon his requesting, 'May I be invulnerable to the divine sages, the Gandharvas, the Yakshas, the Rakshases, and the serpents' I replied, 'Be it so'. This Rákshas, through contempt, said nothing respecting man'; therefore this wicked one shall be destroyed by man. The gods, proceeded by Shakra, hearing these words spoken by Brahmá, were filled with joy.

"At this time Vishnu the glorious, the lord of the world, arrayed in yellow, with hand ornaments of glowing gold, riding on Vinatya, as the sun on a cloud, arrived with his conch, his discus, and his club in his hand. Being adored by the excellent celestials, and welcomed by Brahmá, he drew near and stood before him. All the gods then addressed Vishnu,

* Kúvera and Ravana are both called by this name, being both the sons of Vishnu-shravya by different mothers. Here the former is meant.

"O Madhusūdana* thou art able to abolish the distress of the distressed. We intreat thee, be our sanctuary, O Achyuta"; Vishnu replied, 'say what shall I do'? The celestials hearing these his words, added further, 'The virtuous, the encourager of excellence, eminent for truth, the firm observer of his vows, being childless, is performing an Ashwa-medha for the purpose of obtaining offspring. For the sake of the good of the universe, we intreat thee, O Vishnu, to become his son. Dividing thyself into four parts, in the wombs of his three consorts equal to Hari, Shri; and Kirti,† assume the sonship of king Dasha-ratha, the lord of Ayodhya, eminent in the knowledge of duty, generous, and illustrious as the great sages. Thus becoming man, O Vishnu, conquer in battle Ravana, the terror of the universe, who is invulnerable to the gods. This ignorant Rakshus Ravana, by the exertion of his power, afflicts the gods, the Gandharvas, the Siddhas, and the most excellent sages; these sages, the Gandharvas, and the Ap-saras, sporting in the forest Nandana,‡ have been destroyed by that furious one. 'We, with the sages, are come to thee seeking his destruction. The Siddhas, the Gandharvas, and the Yakshas betake themselves to thee, thou art our only refuge; O Deva, afflicter of enemies, regard the world of men, and destroy the enemy of the gods'.

"Vishnu, the sovereign of the gods, the chief of the celestials, adored by all beings, being thus supplicated, replied to all the assembled gods (standing) before Brahmá, "Abandon fear; peace be with you; for your benefit having killed Ravana the cruel, destructively active, the cause of fear to the divine sages, together with all his posterity, his courtiers and counsellors, and his relations, and friends, protecting the earth, I will remain incarnate among men for the space of eleven thousand years'.

"Having given this promise to the gods, the divine Vishnu, ardent in the work, sought a birth-place among men. Di-

* Madhu-sūdana, i.e. the destroyer of Madhu, a famous Asura.

† Three names of Durga, appearing in these various forms.

‡ The paradise or garden of Indra.

ving himself into four parts, he whose eyes resemble the lotos and the pulásha, the lotos petel-eyed, chose for his father Dasha-ratha the sovereign of men. The divine sages then with the Gandharvas, the Rudras, and the (different sorts of) Apsaras, in the most excellent strains, praised the destroyer of Madhu, (saying) "Root up Rávana, of fervid energy, the devastator, the enemy of Indra swollen with pride. Destroy him, who causes universal lamentation, the annoyer of the holy ascetics, terrible, the terror of the devout Tapaswis. Having destroyed Rávana, tremendously powerful, who causes universal weeping, together with his army and friends dismissing all sorrow, return to heaven, the place free from stain and sin, and protected by the sovereign of the celestial powers.

"Thus far the section, containing the plan for the death of Rávana".

Ráma is a very popular character among the Hindus; but it is surprizing, that the intelligent natives seldom, or never, reflect on the inconsistency of his history, either with a divine revelation, or historical fact. There is so much of the marvellous and unnatural and absurd in the poem of Válmici, that, however much it may be viewed as a curiosity, it must take a low rank as a literary composition. Dr. A. G. Schlegel deserves credit for seeking to introduce it more extensively to the knowledge of the western world, but it is highly amusing to observe the pomp and parade which are associated with his attempt.

H. [p. 67.] *Reported Miracles of Krishna.*

Nanda, the Vaishya in whose house he resided, when looking into Krishna's mouth one day had a surprizing view of the three worlds with Bramhá, Vishnu, and Shiva, sitting upon their thrones. Krishna was connected with the following other marvels, according to the Agin Purána. "Once Yashoda, being angry, bound Krishna to a mortar; but he, dragging it, passed between two trees, by which it was obstructed; and he pulled until the two trees fell: another time she tied him to

a cart, but he broke it into pieces with a blow of his foot: then Putana offered him her breast, and he sucked until she fell down dead. When, also, he had become a youth, he conquered the serpent Kalia, and expelled him from the pool of the Yamuna; and restored to peace the Talavanam by slaying the Asuras, Dhenuka under the form of an ass, Arishta under that of a bull, and Keshina under that of a horse. He abolished the festival of Indra; and when the lord of the sky, in consequence, poured down torrents of rain, he uplifted the mountain Goverdhana, and rendered these torrents innocuous... In a wrestling match, he slew Chanura and Mushtaka, and then slew Kansa the king of Mathura; after which he made Ugra Sena the king of the Yadavas. Having also been instructed in learning by Sandipana, he restored to him his child who had disappeared, after having slain the slain the Daitya Panchajanya and having been duly honoured by Yama. He likewise caused the death of Kala Yavana by means of Muchukunda". See *Kennedy's Mythological Researches*. Krishna was almost a match for Jack the Giant killer.

I. [p. 76.] *On the Origin of Idolatry.*

Notwithstanding all that has been written on this subject in ancient and modern times, it must be admitted that it is still one of extreme obscurity. The perplexity in which most writers have involved themselves is, in a great measure, to be attributed to their desire to give undue prominence to one particular theory. There surely can be nothing unbecoming, however, in the absence of direct historical testimony, in the admission that its rise in the various countries of the world, may be sufficiently accounted for on various suppositions. Those which I consider the most entitled to attention in regard to the HEAVENLY HOSTS, are the following:—

1. "In the days of Enos the son of Seth", says Maimonides, "men fell into grievous errors, and even Enos himself partook of their infatuation. 'Their language was, that since God had placed on high the heavenly bodies, and used them as his ministers,

it was evidently his will, that they should receive from man the same veneration, as the servants of a great prince justly claim from the subject multitude. Impressed with this notion, they began to build temples to the Stars, to sacrifice to them, and to worship them, in the vain expectation, that they should thus please the Creator of all things. At first indeed, they did not suppose the Stars to be the only deities, but adored in conjunction with them the Lord God Omnipotent. In process of time however that great and venerable name was totally forgotten; and the whole human race retained no other religion, than the "idolatrous worship of the host of heaven". "With this superstition", says Mr. Faber, "the patriarch Ham seems to have been tainted, and to have conveyed the knowledge of it to his own particular descendants".

2. The typical reference to the heavenly bodies, and elements; and the confusion which would afterwards follow it, has been adverted to by several writers. Lieutenant Colonel Vans Kennedy supports the theory which is founded upon it with very considerable ingenuity. After stating that the fundamental truths of religion must have been revealed to the progenitors of the human race, he remarks that, "If these postulates be once admitted, the origin of idolatry becomes immediately obvious. For the impressions made on the minds of the first men by their immediate communication with God would become fainter in each succeeding generation; and, as the human mind is scarcely capable of devotion to an invisible and incomprehensible Being, their descendants would be naturally led to adopt some sensible object, as the type of that one self-existent and eternal God whom their fathers had adored. But in this case what other object could Nature present so typical of divine excellence and supremacy, as—

'The orb that with surpassing glory crown'd
Look'd from his sole dominion, like the God
Of that new world, at whose sight all the stars
Veil'd their diminish'd heads'.

"The sun, however, was not always visible, and the sacred fire obviously suggested itself its adequate representative; nor if idolatry originated in Asia or Egypt, could the inhabitants

these countries have long contemplated the serene and brilliant expanse of the heavens, without imagining that it also might be a God, and hence.—

‘Aspicie hoc sublime candens, quæ invocant omnes Jovem’.

“The earth was the next object that impressed on the minds of men the idea of a divine nature; and the cause seems evident from all nations having, on account of its fruitfulness, represented it under the female character: The deification of sensible objects having thus commenced, its extension to the other elements is easily conceivable; and to evince that this was actually the first form of idolatry, there seems to be sufficient evidence”.

3. Perhaps the opinion of some of the Christian Fathers, that when the knowledge of the divine glory and spirituality, which had been communicated by revelation became obscure, men imagined the sun from his station in the heavens, and from his enlightening and vivifying powers, to be *actually* the Supreme God, and the other heavenly bodies inferior deities is entitled to the highest respect. When the depravity of man is considered, the tendency to this corruption is at once perceived. It is probably that which is recognized by Job, when he says, “If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness; and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand: this also were an iniquity (against) the Judge; for I should have denied the God that is above”. It is an indubitable fact that in many countries of the world the heavenly bodies are believed to be actually gods.

It has been said that the transition from the heavenly bodies to BEINGS of different SHAPES, and particularly of the human form, is easily conceived. It is most rational, however, to suppose, that the worship which referred to these objects, had an origin different from the worship of the former.

1. The ante-diluvian and post-diluvian progenitors of mankind, the founders of states and cities, the inventors of particular arts and improvements, distinguished conquerors, and indeed all remarkable characters, would naturally be greatly venerated and respected. This regard combined with the belief in the immortality of the soul, might lead their successors to imagine that

they might have an extraordinary power with the Deity, to view them as mediators, and to address them in worship.

2. Men, when reasoning on the nature of God, and the exertions of his power, might suppose that he had a form which acted on matter, and that this form was the human, the most noble with which they were acquainted, or similar to those of animals and objects with which energy is particularly connected. The Jews were repeatedly commanded to remember that God had no likeness; and this fact shews that there is a tendency to evil in this direction.

3. The origin of the doctrine of pantheism, and of that variation of it, which, while it admits the distinction of matter and spirit, recognizes the existence of one soul with multifarious emanations, has seldom formed the subject of dispute; but its connexion with popular polytheism has not been sufficiently illustrated. A choice of individuated forms, according to the views entertained of their importance, is a necessary, or at least not an unnatural, consequence of pantheism. This circumstance may, in many cases, account for the origin of gods possessed of forms. The doctrine of the metempsychosis, perhaps originated in pantheism, and from the belief in the metempsychosis, there would be a disposition to trace a supposed god in several appearances, at different periods of time.

4. The traditions relative to the visits of angels might, when abused, in some cases produce corruption in worship.

The resort to IMAGES, as *symbols*, would be an easy step in depravity, when once it was imagined that the gods had forms. When an image was consecrated to a particular God, it might be supposed that an emanation from the divinity made it a special residence. The symbolical worship would, on account of this latter circumstance, as in the case of the Hindus, be entirely lost sight of; and a present God, with a material body, would be realized.

In the changes of society, and the progress of time, the worship of the different countries of the world underwent great vicissitudes. Gods were forgotten, and gods were borrowed; and the same gods were placed in the Calendar with different names. The subject is the most melancholy and awful which

can be imagined. Men professing themselves to wise became fools, and changed the glory of God into a lie.

K. [p. 79.] *Idolatrous Worship of the Hindus.*

In the text I have alluded to the different ceremonies, as they have been presented to my own observation. Some of the expressions quoted are those which are principally used by the agriculturists in the Dakhan. In the third volume of Mr. Ward's Work, there is a very correct and pretty extended view of the subject. The following quotation from the Linga Purána is to be found in Kennedy's Mythological Researches.

"Having bathed in the prescribed manner, enter the place of worship; and, having performed three suppressions of the breath,* meditate on that god who has three eyes, five heads, ten arms, and is of the colour of pure crystal, arrayed in costly garments, and adorned with all kinds of ornaments: and having thus fixed in thy mind the real form of Maheshwara, proceed to worship him with the proper prayers and hymns. First, sprinkle the place and utensils of worship with a bunch of *darbha* dipped in perfumed water, repeating at the same time the sacred word *om*, and arrange all the utensils and other things required in the prescribed order; then, in due manner, and repeating the proper invocations, prayers, and hymns preceded by the sacred word *om*, prepare thy offerings. For the padiam,† these should consist of ushiram,‡ sandal, and similar sweet-smelling woods; for the achamanam,§ of mace, camphor, bdellium, and agallochum, ground together; and, for the arghya,|| of the tops

* "*Pranayama*, which Mr. Celebrooke thus describes:—"Closing the left nostril with the two longest fingers of the right hand, the worshipper draws breath through the right nostril, and then closing that nostril likewise with his thumb, holds his breath; he then raises both fingers of the left nostril, and emits the breath which he had suppressed".—*Asiatic Researches*, Vol. V. p. 348.

† "Water for the ablution of the feet rendered fragrant by these means. The water is not here specified, as it is implied in the word padiam.

‡ "The root of the *Andropogon muricatus*.

§ "Water for rinsing the mouth.

|| "A particular kind of oblation, which consists of different articles in the worship of different deities. Here the pieces of money are unusual, and *ambes* (made from dried cow-dung,) are sacred to Shiva only.

of kusha grass, prepared grains of rice, barley, sesamum, clarified butter, pieces of money, ashes, and flowers. At the same time, also must be worshipped Nandi,* and his wife, the daughter of Marut. Having then with due rites prepared a seat, invoke with the prescribed prayers the presence of Parameshwara, and present to him the *padmam*, *achamanam* and *arghya*. Next bathe the lingam with perfumed water, the five products of the cow, clarified butter, honey, the juice of the sugar-cane, and lastly pour over it a pot of pure water, consecrated by the requisite prayers. Having thus purified it, adorn it with clean garments and a sacrificial string, and then offer flowers, perfumes, frankincense, lamps, fruits, and different kinds of prepared eatables, and ornaments. Thus worship the lingam with the prescribed offerings, invocations, prayers, and, by circumambulating it, and by prostrating thyself before Shiva, represented under this symbol".†

L. [p. 90.] *Labours of Shankarāchārya.*

The Brāhmins consider Shankara as a great champion of

* "The principal attendant of Shiva, and supposed to be a portion of that God, who granted a son as a boon to a holy ascetic named Shilada, and also conceived that he would be born as that son".

† "Lajnga Purana, part i. chapter 25. I have here considerably abridged the original, but nothing material is omitted, as the invocations, prayers, and hymns are not inserted at length, but merely referred to by their titles. At the present day the whole of this ritual is not observed, nor is this worship performed in that costly manner which is recommended in the Purana. But the worship of all the deities consists of sixteen essential requisites:—1. *asanam*, the preparing a seat for the God; 2. *asahanam*, the invoking his presence; 3. *padmam*; 4. *achamanam*; 5. *arghya*; 6. bathing the image; 7. clothing it; 8. *prastava* it with a sacrificial string; 9. offerings of perfumes; 10. flowers; 11. incense; 12. lamps; 13. *naivedya*, i. e. offerings consisting of fruits and prepared eatables; 14. betel leaf; 15. prayers, &c.; 16. circumambulation. The more of these acts that are performed the more complete is the worship; but at present it is general consists of nothing more than presenting some of the prescribed offerings, and muttering a short prayer or two while the lingam is circumambulating: the rest of the acts being performed by the officiating priest.

"It ought to be added, that this worship need not be performed at a temple, but in any properly purified place; and that it is most efficacious when performed on the bank of some holy river, before a lingam formed *pro hac vice* of clay which, on the worship being terminated, is thrown into the sacred stream".

their faith; but, in this part of India at least, they are generally ignorant of his tenets. The allusion which is made to him by Mora Bhatta, I have reason to believe, is merely intended to impress his readers with the vain idea that powerful arguments in defence of Hinduism are still in store. Several commentaries are ascribed to Shankara; and there is also a work entitled *Shankara Digvijaya*, and purporting to be written by Ananda Giri, one of Shankara's disciples. "Some of the marvels it records of Shankara", says Mr. H. H. Wilson "which the author professes to have seen, may be thought to effect its credibility, if not its authenticity; and either Ananda Giri must be an unblushing liar, or the book is not his own: it is, however, of little consequence, as even, if the work be not that of Ananda Giri himself, it bears internal and indisputable evidence of being the composition of a period, not far removed from that at which he may be supposed to have flourished, and we may, therefore, follow it as a very safe guide, in our enquiries into the actual state of the Hindu Religion about eight or nine centuries ago. The various sectaries of the Hindu Religion then existing, are all introduced to be combated, and, of course, conquered, by Shankara".

The Hindu sects which are said to have been conquered by Shankara are the VAISHNAVAS, consisting of the *Bhāktas*, *Bhāgavatas*, *Vaishnavas*, *Chakrinās*, or *Pancharātrakas*, *Vai-khānasas*, and *Karmahīnas*, and subdivided into the *Karma* and *Jnyāna* portions; and none of which can be identified with the Vaishnava sects of the present day; the SHIVAS, embracing the *Shaivas*, *Raudras*, *Ugras*, *Bhāktas*, *Jangamas*, and *Pāsupatas*; the worshippers of BRAHMA, AGNI, SURYA, GANESHA; the adorers of the female energies, BHAVANI, MAHA-LAKSHMI, and SARASVATI; the INFIDEL SECTS, or the *Chārvākas* or *Shunyavadis*, *Saugatis*, *Kshapanakas*, *Jainas*, and *Bauddhas*. It is worthy of remark that no allusion is made to the worship of Sītā and Rādhā, either singly, or in conjunction with Rāma and Krishna. See *Asiatic Researches* Vol. XVI.

M. [p. 108] *Garga Rishi's Cow.*

"The Rishis asked, 'How did Kaushika's sons obtain the Supreme Union. Suta replied:—In Kurukshetra, there was a Rishi, named Kaushika. He had seven sons called Swasripa, Krodhana, Himstra, Pishuna, Kavi, Wagrišta, and Pitriwari. Their father Kaushika died; and a dreadful famine came on. Having nothing to eat, they went to Garga Rishi, who sent them into the woods to herd his cow. One day when pinched with hunger they said among themselves:—What would you think of killing the cow and eating her. The youngest son said:—If we kill her let us offer her to the manes of our father, and feast on her afterwards. All agreed to his plan; and he having put two of his brothers in the place of gods, and three in the place of ancestors, one being made a guest, they killed and ate up the cow; and at night brought home the calf to the Rishi, and told him that a tiger had eaten up the cow. For this meritorious act they obtained union in five births; and had the remembrance of all the former in every succeeding birth". *Extract from the Matsya Purāna.* The Rev. Mr. Stevenson of Poona observed to me, that he has frequently found the recital of this story a powerful *argumentum ad hominem* in the case of the Brāhmins.

N. [p. 125.] *On the Responsibility of the Heathen.*

The statement made in the text may appear to some professing Christians as harsh and severe. It is consistent, however, with the doctrine of all the Reformed Churches, which have exhibited their creeds and confessions. "The eighteenth Article of the United Church of England and Ireland, I have observed in another place, "is the following: 'They also are to be had accursed that presume to say that every man shall be saved by the Law or Sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law, and the light of nature. For Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved'. The doctrine of

the Church of Scotland, and of the other Presbyterian Churches, will be learned from the following passage from the Westminster Confession of Faith. 'Elect Infants, dying in Infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth. So also are all other Elect persons, who are incapable of being called by the ministry of the word. Others, not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the word, and may have some common operations of the Spirit; yet they never truly come to Christ, and therefore cannot be saved: much less can men, not professing the Christian Religion, be saved in any other way whatever, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the law of that religion they do profess; and to assert that they may, is very pernicious and to be detested'. Quotations of a similar nature, from other standards, and from the writings of the most respectable divines, can easily be adduced. Those which we have given shew, that the respective churches alluded to distinctly teach; that not only is salvation, in every case, the purchase of Christ; but that, in every case, it is applied through the sanctification of the Spirit.

"God, who is just, will not condemn any portion of mankind for acting contrary to principles and laws which have not in any form been revealed to them, or which they could not in any possible manner discover; for he will assuredly accept according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not. But the foundation of the argument relative to the impossibility of the salvation of the Heathen, while they remain in their present situation, consists in the fact that they have transgressed, and habitually transgressed, the law which God originally implanted in the human heart, and which requires perfect and perpetual obedience,—the love of God with the whole heart, and soul and strength, and mind. Of this law they undoubtedly have some knowledge; and into this law, the works of God, and the dealings of his Providence, have a tendency to lead them to inquire. By this law they will be judged, and for the transgression of the law, they will be condemned.

"Let no man think lightly of the wretched condition of the Heathen, We know who has declared, that they 'have no hope, and are without God in the world'. Among them there may be some few 'elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the word', and who 'are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth'; but none, as far as we are aware, have yet been recognized, in the judgment of Christian charity, guided by the word of God, as existing in this situation. The uniform testimony of those who have minutely observed the heathen, has been, that they worship not the Father of Spirits in spirit and in truth; that they practise the most abominable idolatries; and that they do those things, which are not convenient'. The gospel must be proclaimed to them as the only remedy; and even in mercy to their immortal souls, they, as well as professing Christians, must be informed, that he that believeth not on the Son of God, is condemned". *Oriental Christian Spectator*, April 1831.

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FINIS.

ERRATA.

- Page 30 line 7 for "stāpanā", read "st'hāpanā".
 " 40 " 1 for "business", read "baseness".
 " 43 " 18 after "disposed", insert "of".
 " 43 note after "See", insert "also".
 " 51 line 12 for "Valmika", read "Valmiki".
 " 125 " 28 for "impurity", read "impunity".

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